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CHINESE MEDICAL QIGONG

SINGING DRAGON

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"This is the first English translation of this ancient art of Chinese medicine. It is a must-read for Traditional Chinese Medical practitioners as it allows the traditional principles of Qigong to be related to current scientific evidence. The book was generally an excellent read, being a great introduction to the practice of Qigong for both experienced and non-experienced TCM practitioners…as a sole English reference book in the practice of Qigong it makes an excellent reference text for any TCM practitioner… Personally, I found this book an excellent read as a practitioner of a more Western approach of acupuncture. It presented itself very well at demonstrating the approach of Qigong to many typically 'Western' diagnoses, which I found useful as a mainly non-TCM practitioner. Overall, *Chinese Medical Qigong* is an excellent reference text in the TCM practice of Qigong a vital read for any practitioner."

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"There are very few texts on the instruction of Qigong that address both the art and science of this form of movement meditation and therapy. *Chinese Medical Qigong* does both in a clearly documented and organized manner and does it well. The first English translation of the 'only official textbook of Medical Qigong utilized in TCM universities in China' does not suffer from translation but, rather, guides the reader through such diverse topics as Qigong history, theory, forms, research, and clinical application… It is likely to become the 'go-to' textbook in any medical program that includes Qi-based therapies or self-care."

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"The content of this book is extensive and all-inclusive. It consists of fundamental theories, practical methods and skills, clinical applications of Qigong therapy, classical Qigong literature, and many other more. This textbook will be a useful tool for medical students and health care professionals who are interested in complementary and alternative therapies. It will also be an important resource book for anyone who practices mind-body exercise (i.e. Tai Chi and Qigong)."

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—The Empty Vessel

"What the wealth of material in this book should do is destroy a common idea that a weekend course in Qigong is enough to qualify someone in its mastery… A worthwhile addition to any practitioner's collection."

—The European Journal of Oriental Medicine

Chinese Medical Qigong

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Editor's Foreword

Since the English hardback edition of *Chinese Medical Qigong* was published in London in 2010, three years have passed in a flash. When the hardback edition was published, the idea of publishing the book in paperback had already been conceived. The hardback edition is a full text translation of the original Chinese textbook. It is useful because it reports reliably on the whole panorama of the subject of Chinese Medical Qigong. But there are also possible shortcomings to it, for such a translation, with so much space and attention devoted to the academic aspects, may not be suitable for Western general readers.

The length of this paperback edition is about two-thirds that of the hardback. The chapters on classical Qigong literature and Qigong history in China have been reduced, taking into account that they are not central to the demands of Western general readers. And the number of Qigong forms and the diseases for which treatment by Qigong is appropriate are fewer than in the hardback. However, in addition to cutting some material, the content has been revised, and new content has been added for the paperback. In the three years since the hardback was published in English, a new Chinese edition of the *Chinese Medical Qigong* textbook has been issued, and the recent research results on Qigong published in it have been included in the paperback, thus keeping up with the pace of the times. The following are several important differences between the contents of the paperback and hardback editions.

The definition of Qigong in the paperback has been revised a little: two words have been added, and the word order adjusted. The definition in the hardback is: *Qigong is the skill of body-mind exercise that integrates body, breath and mind adjustments into one.* In the paperback the definition is: *Qigong is the skill of body-mind exercise that integrates three adjustments of body, breath and mind into one.* The changes allow the definition to express more clearly the relationship between the operational contents (body, breath, and mind adjustments) of Qigong and its operational aim (integrate the three adjustments into one), and it is easier to understand. Actually, the definition of Qigong is the cornerstone of

Qigong academic theory—one can say that a single word is worth a thousand pieces of gold, so any effort that can make the definition more accurate is worth doing. Moreover, such a revision shows that the definition of Qigong is not immutable and frozen, and as our understanding of the essence of Qigong deepens, its definition will also be deepened, although the correct and most scientific understanding is not easy to reach. As well as the revised Qigong definition, in this edition some other definitions of basic concepts, such as "keep the mind on" and "mental visualization," have also been revised, as the reader will discover.

The most substantial additions and revisions in the paperback are the chapters on current scientific research into Qigong, and these reflect the continuing progress in the field of research. It should be said that modern scientific research into Qigong is still in its infancy. The characteristics of such a stage are that the research works are sometimes hot and sometimes cold, sometimes back and sometimes forth, with multi-disciplinary and miscellaneous research directions, and most especially, there are no clear and effective research methods. Currently, the overall situation in this field is that the research results are many, but their reliability is not good enough. Some new research has been added to the paperback, some older research findings with poor reliability have been deleted.

One new piece of research is into EEG topographic during Qigong exercise. The research reveals that, in the process of Qigong exercise, the main thinking form of subjects changes from the abstract and image thinking of daily life to perceptual thinking in the Qigong state. It is well-known that in comparing Qigong exercise with physical exercise, the most important distinction between them is that the former exercises towards the internal, whereas the latter towards the external, as in the expression "internal cultivation supports essence, Qi and spirit, while external cultivation supports sinew, bone and skin." To realize internal cultivation, the subject must rely on internal exercise skills, and changing the thinking form is the key skill.

It should be pointed out that "perceptual thinking" is a new term. The word "perceptual" is borrowed from "perceptual psychology," but here it is used in another sense, which has two aspects. First, the original meaning of "perceptual psychology" is to research integrative sensory processes which react to external stimuli, but the meaning of "perceptual thinking" is to research the processes of creating internal sensation without external stimuli. So the word "perceptual" in different terms indicates different sensory processes. Because to create internal sensation is a conscious, active and purposive process carried out by the consciousness, it is a form of thinking: perceptual thinking. Second, perceptual thinking is not only a psychological activity, but also a psychosomatic activity. One experiment has shown that with the same thinking theme (i.e. subjects

thinking about the same topic) the EEG changed when subjects were engaged in abstract thinking and image thinking, but both EEG and EMG changed in perceptual thinking.

The research above advanced understanding of the distinctive thinking form during Qigong exercise, and found a new way to clarify the physiological and psychological mechanisms of Qigong exercise. It is also very useful to Qigong practitioners for it can guide Qigong exercise through scientific data. However, although the research has been introduced in the appropriate chapters in the paperback, the book is not a scientific paper, for it is difficult to explain any single piece of research in detail. So if readers are interested in the research, the relevant research literature needs to be consulted.

The basic operation of Qigong is always the core part of a Qigong textbook, and the chapter devoted to this has been strengthened in the paperback edition. In the final analysis, learning Qigong must be done in actual practice; as the definition of Qigong says, Qigong exercise is a kind of skill training. The content of the basic operation of Qigong includes the main Qigong exercise skills and their standardizations. According to recent research, in Qigong exercise the major skill is to integrate the three adjustments of body, breath and mind into one. It is also the main distinction between Qigong exercise and physical exercise. Both Qigong and physical exercise involve the same three adjustments, but Qigong exercise emphasizes integrating them into one, while in physical exercise, the three adjustments are always operated distinctly, and one of them, especially body adjustment, is often emphasized.

Compared with the hardback, the content of the paperback is more focused on practical application, so it is more appropriate for readers who want to learn Qigong exercise. In my own experience, I want to tell Qigong lovers that the basic method of Qigong exercise is to choose a Qigong form that you like, and to exercise the three adjustments of body, breath and mind in each section of the form step by step, from practicing them one by one individually to integrating them into one. When you can stay in one state during your exercise from beginning to end, you have mastered the form. After you have learned one Qigong form, if you want, you can learn one or two others. But please remember, there is no need to learn a lot of Qigong forms, because any Qigong form is only a means or vehicle to reach the unified state of Qigong. The goal of learning Qigong exercise is not to master a Qigong form, but to hold the Qigong state. As for what kind of Qigong form is better for you, it is different from person to person. Generally speaking, the form that you like may be a suitable form for you, for there will be some factors consistent between you and that form, otherwise you wouldn't like it. Furthermore, if you persevere in exercising just the form you are fond of for a long time, you can reach success.

Finally, I want to give special thanks to two ladies—Xiao Mei and Jessica. The associate editor in chief of this paperback edition, Xiao Mei, is an excellent acupuncture doctor. Her bilingual Chinese and English skills and her rich knowledge of Chinese medicine mean that she has edited this book successfully and magnificently. Jessica is the head of the publishing house that has published this book. She has herself reviewed the full text of the paperback and polished the language as a native English speaker. Therefore, it is an honor to publish this book with Singing Dragon.

Liu Tianjun
Beijing, 23 January 2013

General Introduction

Qigong is one of the essential elements of traditional Chinese culture. Qigong therapy, an important branch of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), has a history going back thousands of years. Qigong therapy is still used today to prevent diseases and treat illness, and is drawing increasing attention from scientists and practitioners of modern medicine. From the early 1990s onward, the theories and methods of Qigong have been carefully analyzed and organized and Qigong has developed as a unique discipline. Having been part of TCM for many years, Qigong eventually became "Qigongology," or Chinese Medical Qigong (CMQ), a new subject based on a very ancient history.

I. Essential Concepts of CMQ

Chinese Medical Qigong is based on a combination of academic TCM and practical study of Qigong—in other words, the basic concepts of CMQ involve both Chinese medicine and Qigong.

A. Qigong

1. History of the Term "Qigong"

Qigong, defined as energy (Qi) skill (gong), first appeared in the book *Ana of Pure and Bright School* or *Jing Ming Zong Jiao Lu* (净明宗教录) by the Daoist priest Xu Xun (许逊)[1] during the Jin dynasty (265–420 AD). *Ana of Pure and Bright School—Pine Tree and Sand Record* or *Jing Ming Zong Jiao Lu—Song Sa Ji* says: "To be a Daoist, practice Qigong to start, cultivate internal Qi, then refine on elixir." Thus, from the very beginning, Qigong has been associated with Daoist cultivation and practice. However, after its initial appearance, the term "Qigong" was not widely adopted for more than a thousand years. It appeared in some books at the end of the Qin dynasty and was mentioned in some health and medical books during the period of the Republic of China (中华

民国, 1911–1949). There were, however, a myriad schools of what is now called Qigong, each employing their own terms, such as *Chan Ding* (禅定), *Mindfulness in Buddhism*; *Xin Zhai* (心斋), *Sitting and Forgetting in Confucian*; *Dao Yin* (导引), *Conduction Exercise and Guiding Energy*; *Xin-Qi* (行气), *Moving Qi Around in Medicine*; and *Nei Gong* (内功), *Internal Skill in the Martial Arts*. All these terms suggested the same meaning, "inner cultivation"—cultivating one's energy, health, awareness, character, and/or spirit, but each had its own expression and style of practice. Even the Daoist tradition included various schools using different terms, such as "internal elixir" (内丹), "heavenly cycle" (周天), or "fetal respiration" (胎息). Although different Qigong terms reflected the unique practice emphases or aims of each school, they all had, in effect, similar practices, based on similar philosophy.

The term "Qigong" did not come into formal or common usage until the 1950s, after the founding of the People's Republic of China. The term was first officially adopted in 1955 by the "Tangshan Qigong Sanatorium," Hebei Province. Since then it has been used in the practice and literature of both clinical Chinese medicine and personal health care. At the end of the 1970s, with the rise of what came to be called "the Qigong Fever," the word became more and more popular. Many schools of physical or spiritual cultivation flourished, each claiming the name "Qigong," including Daoist Qigong (道家气功), Tibetan Esoteric Buddhism Qigong (藏密气功), Wushu (Martial Arts) Qigong (武术气功), etc. After the 1980s, with the open-door policy in China, Qigong practitioners and teachers as well as information about Qigong appeared in other countries as interest burgeoned among speakers of English, French, German, and other languages. Qigong is now an international phenomenon.

Looking back over the millennia, we can see a significant expansion of the meaning of "Qigong," leading eventually to its current usage. The term is now applied in a general and inclusive manner, embracing all of the various schools and styles. It has moved far beyond its Daoist roots in the ancient writings of Xu Xun (许逊).

2. The Current Definition of "Qigong"

Considering the diversity of its schools, theories, and methods, "Qigong" is not an easy term to define. There are different opinions about the connotations, and hundreds of schools of thought still contend over the proper meaning. However, a consistent definition of Qigong is gradually tending to emerge in the academic Chinese Medical Qigong field. In science, concepts and definitions need to be held in common, and in the history of science, scientific concepts and definitions evolve and improve followed by the evolution and advance of an entire level of that science. This phenomenon is true of Medical Qigong,

where a current yet incomplete definition of Qigong reflects the fact that the subject of Qigong is still in its development.

Current definitions of Qigong reflect the development of the subject of Qigong, which focuses on the exploration, organization, and transmission of classical Qigong as an academic subject. On reading the historic documents from the different Qigong schools of each dynasty, it is clear that the classical discipline of Qigong has been largely concerned with the transmission of skills, sequences of technique, and applications, over a period of thousands of years.

In this book, we advance a definition that incorporates key ideas from classical Qigong with modern scientific criteria of knowledge: *Qigong is the skill of body-mind exercise that integrates the three adjustments of body, breath and mind into one.*[i]

The definition above can be understood on four levels. First, the content of "Qigong" exercises is based on "the three adjustments" of body, breath, and mind. Second, the aim of the three adjustments is to achieve a state of harmonious unity—integrating these adjustments into one. Third, it expresses the place of Qigong in modern science—it consists of both physical and mental training, that is, it belongs to both physiology and psychology: it is a mind-body medicine. Lastly, the definition classifies Qigong as a branch of knowledge concerned with mastering practice skills and techniques.

In the definition above, the first two levels are essentially academic categories derived from the study of classical Qigong, but they explain Qigong methods in modern language. To practice Qigong is to practice the three adjustments; the aim is to achieve the state of Oneness by integrating the adjustments. That is, the three adjustments cannot exist independently; instead, body, breath, and mind are a unity.[ii] There is a popular belief that the three adjustments themselves stand for Qigong. But attention needs to be paid to the rest of the definition: the state of unity. This state of Oneness is the criterion that distinguishes Qigong from ordinary physical exercises. Conventional exercises such as calisthenics also include the three adjustments of body, breath, and state of mind (mental focus and concentration). However, in such exercises the three adjustments are practiced independently, not unified.

The last two levels of the definition of Qigong, that as a scientific discipline it includes both mental and physical exercise, and as a practical skill it requires

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i The term "tiao" 调, here translated as "adjust," may also be translated as "regulate" or "tune," as in tuning a piano, or as "alignment."

ii The implication is that body, breath, and mind exert a reciprocal influence on each other. For example, when the body relaxes, breathing rate slows down and the mind becomes calm. "Body, breath, and mind unified" also suggests that the Qigong practitioner seeks a state of inner unity or wholeness in contrast to a feeling of inner discord and fragmentation, of being in "bits and pieces."

mastery of techniques, clearly distinguishes it from related disciplines such as psychology. And because it emphasizes skill-learning and practice, there is a difference not only between Qigong and purely theoretical knowledge, but also between Qigong and religion, which is based on faith and belief rather than mastery of skills.

B. Qigong Study in Chinese Medicine

Chinese medicine and Qigong have an inner and essential connection; based on the same classical philosophy, worldview, and methodology, the aims of the two are similar. Qigong methods of treatment and health maintenance have been adopted by TCM.

The use of Qigong as a medical therapy can be traced back to the ancient beginnings of TCM. In Chinese academia, the branch of Qigong that is guided by TCM theory is known as the Medical Qigong School. Modern CMQ is based on the theory of ancient Medical Qigong combined with modern science and technology. Currently, it is defined as a clinical and applied branch of TCM on a par with acupuncture and Tuina (Chinese massage therapy).

Throughout Chinese history, numerous successful TCM doctors have been Qigong experts: Bian Que (扁鹊) in the Warring States Period; Hua Tuo (华佗) and Zhang Zhongjing (张仲景) in the Han dynasty; Chao Yuanfang (巢元方) in the Sui dynasty; Sun Simiao (孙思邈) and Wang Tao (王涛) in the Tang dynasty; Liu Wansu (刘完素), Zhang Zihe (张子和), Li Dongyuan (李东垣), and Zhu Danxi (朱丹溪) in the Jin and Yuan dynasties; Li Shizhen (李时珍) and Yang Jizhou (杨继洲) in the Ming dynasty; Ye Tianshi (叶天士) and Wu Jutong (吴鞠通) in the Qing dynasty; Zhang Xichun (张锡纯) during the Republic Period, etc. These Master physicians contributed greatly to TCM in their time, and the history of Chinese medicine should not be ignored. Discussions of Qigong theory and clinical practice, including clear opinions and reliable techniques, are found in their published works. Some of their work has had a great influence in the history of Chinese medicine as well as on the formation of Qigong scholarship. Especially noteworthy are the *Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun* (诸病源侯论) (Figure I.1) by Chao Yuanfang (巢元方)[2] of the Sui dynasty and *Study on the Eight Extra Meridians* or *Qi Jing Ba Mai Kao* (奇经八脉考) (Figure I.2) by Li Shizhen (李时珍)[3] in the Ming dynasty. The fact that Master physicians from the past recognized and studied Qigong indicates the necessary link between TCM and Qigong and TCM's significance in modern Qigong.

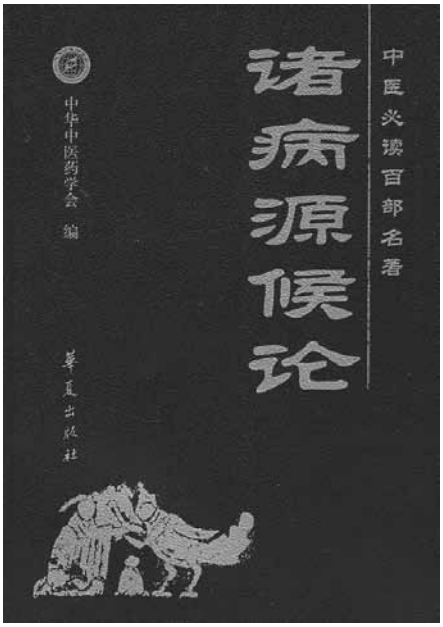

Figure I.1 *Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* (*Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun*, 诸病源候论) by Chao YuanFang (巢元方), an imperial physician of the Sui dynasty, is a Medical Qigong text in addition to being a medical treatise categorizing diseases

Figure I.2 *Study on the Eight Extra Meridians* (*Qi Jing Ba Mai Kao*, 奇经八脉考) written by Li Shizhen (李时珍) in the Ming dynasty

An enormous number of Qigong texts have been discovered in historical TCM documents. In *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (黄帝内经) (Figure I.3),[4] there are eight sections that clearly mention Qigong theory and principles of Qigong therapy, including references to Daoyin, "leading and guiding the Qi," and Xing Qi, "directing Qi." For example, in *Shang Gu Tian Zhen Lun* (上古天真论), "Treatise on Natural Truth in Remote Antiquity," a chapter in the *Su Wen* (素问) or *Plain Questions* (part of the *Yellow Emperor's Classic*), we read:

> I have heard that in remote antiquity there were "perfected people" (zhen ren) who mastered Heaven and Earth and controlled Yin and Yang. They breathed the refined Qi, preserved their spirit independently, and their muscles and flesh were an integrated unity. Thus they were able to achieve the longevity of Heaven and Earth, for which there is no end. All of this was because they lived in accord with the Dao (道).

In the original text, this short group of 42 Chinese characters captures the basic theory and methods of classical Qigong. We can see within it the modern concept of "integrating three adjustments into one."

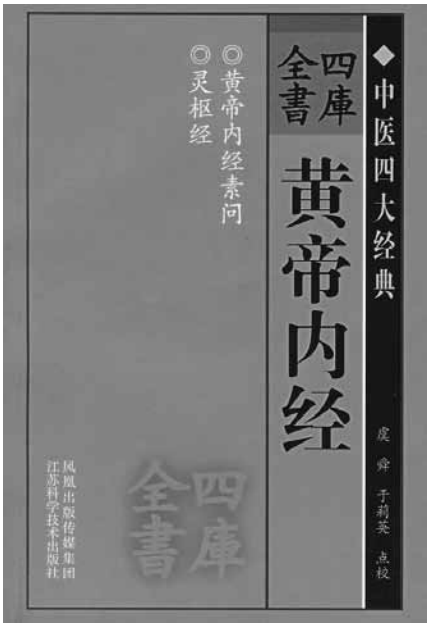

Figure I.3 *Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (*Huang Di Nei Jing*, 黄帝内经), the earliest classical Chinese medicine book, while discussing the medical theory, also analyzes multiple aspects of Qigong

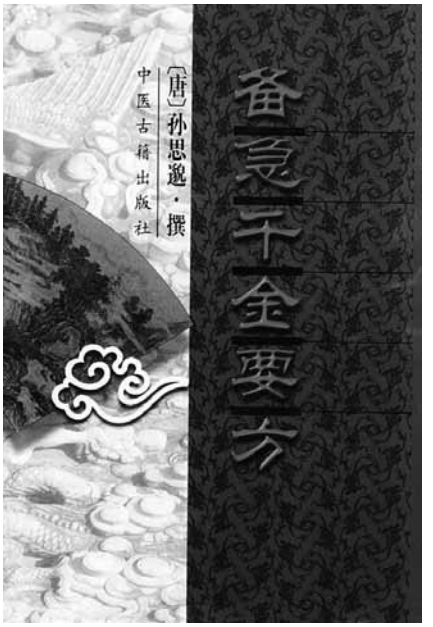

Figure I.4 *Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies* (*Bei Ji Qian Jin Yao Fang*, 备急千金要方) by Sun Simiao (孙思邈) summarized the medical achievements made by his predecessors from the Han to Tang dynasties, covering diagnosis, therapy, acupuncture, Daoyin, massage, and life-nurturing forms

Consulting ancient Chinese medical literature from the standpoint of Qigong, besides *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (黄帝内经) we find the most discussion and description in the following works: *Records of Cultivating Mind and Prolonging Life* or *Yang Xing Yan Ming Lu* (养性延命录) by Tao Hongjing (陶弘景) of the South and North dynasties, *Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun* (诸病源侯论) by Chao Yuanfang (巢元方)[2] of the Sui dynasty, *Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies* or *Qian Jin Yao Fang* (千金要方) (Figure I.4) by Sun Simiao (孙思邈)[5] of the Tang dynasty, *Comprehensive Record of Sages* or *Sheng Ji Zong Lu* (圣济总录)[6] compiled by order of Emperor Hui Zong in the Song dynasty, *Essentials of Attaining Longevity* or *Xiu Ling Yao Zhi* (修龄要旨) by Leng Qian (冷谦), *Eight Essays for Cherishing Life* or *Zun Sheng Ba Jian* (遵生八笺) by Gao Lian (高濂) of the Ming dynasty, and *Treatise on Causes and Symptoms of Miscellaneous Diseases* or *Za Bing Yuan Liu Xi Zhu* (杂病源流犀烛) by Shen Jinao (沈金鳌)[7] of the Qing dynasty. These works, with their references to Qigong theory, techniques and

healing applications, are regarded as the major sources for the formation and development of CMQ. Among them, it is necessary to point out that *Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun* (诸病源侯论)[2] by Chao Yuanfang (巢元方), an imperial physician of the Sui dynasty, is a Medical Qigong text in addition to being a medical treatise categorizing diseases. Rather than herbal prescriptions and acupuncture, it prescribes only Qigong therapy for all diseases.

In our contemporary era, many people in the field of Chinese medicine and Chinese medical scholarship have high regard for Qigong. In the late 1960s, among celebrated Chinese doctors, Mr. Qin Buowei (秦伯未) and Mr. Ren Yingqiu (任应秋) proposed to the Ministry of Hygiene that TCM education be reformed to include Qigong courses. Since the 1980s, more than ten TCM universities and colleges have established such courses. Qigong Research Institutes were set up in Beijing University of Chinese Medicine and Shanghai University of Chinese Medicine, thus creating a solid foundation for further Qigong studies. In July 1994, the textbook *Qigong Study of TCM* (中医气功学),[8] a collaboration of more than ten universities, colleges, and institutes of TCM, was published by The People's Health Press. This was the first Medical Qigong text since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and was widely used. It was also the only Qigong educational work composed collectively and was the key step in establishing Qigong as a valid research subject. In 1999, a greatly improved edition of *Qigong Study of TCM* was released by the The People's Health Press as a designated textbook in the *New Century National Advanced Chinese Medicine Textbook Series*.[9] From composing the textbook of Qigong to its standardization, Qigong study has made a huge advance. After ten years of development, Qigong has finally become a mature subject, the equivalent of other TCM subjects.

Compared with the subject of Qigong as a whole, Qigong study possesses its own features or characteristics. Based on the current requirements of Qigong research, Qigong study, based on TCM theory, incorporates the theories of Western medicine and modern science. As a therapy, Medical Qigong's purpose is to nurture life (Yang Sheng) and to treat illness, although the purpose of ancient, classical Qigong cultivation was not limited to these aims. Nurturing life and treating illness share connections as well as differences; the former focuses on making healthy people healthier and combating the debility that comes with age, the latter on treating patients' diseases. Modern CMQ, with its emphasis on treating disease, differs from the many kinds of ancient Qigong designed for spiritual cultivation.

In general, CMQ includes Qigong history, essential theories, practical skills, and TCM clinical application. Exercise methods from various Qigong schools such as the Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian have been assimilated into CMQ,

as long as they are seen to be beneficial to nurturing life and treating disease regardless of the school to which the methods originally belonged.

II. The Academic System of CMQ

From the viewpoint of structure and development as an academic system, CMQ is composed of various parts—essential theories, practical skills, and clinical applications.

A. Basic Theory

The basic theory of CMQ described in this book includes the history of CMQ, both traditional Qigong theories and those based on modern scientific research. It is necessary to study the history of CMQ comprehensively, accurately, and systematically by looking into its origins, the courses of formation, and the pattern of development, because they lay the foundation for inheriting and carrying forward CMQ.

The traditional theory of Medical Qigong is built on the doctrines of Yin-Yang and the Five Elements; the (Zang-Fu) Internal Organs and Meridians; Qi-Blood and Body Fluids; Jing (essence), Qi, and Shen (spirit); and various other doctrines. It also includes theories of cultivation and practice derived from Daoism and Buddhism. While studying TCM theory, paying attention to the emphases on Qigong subjects regarding Qigong theory from other schools, it is necessary to select the essence and discard the dross. Since the 1980s, modern science has studied many subjects under the rubric of "Qigong," from phenomenon to mechanism. Research in physiology, psychology, physics, and biochemistry has played an important part in probing Qigong's therapeutic effect and mechanisms. In addition, the current mission includes analyzing, evaluating, organizing, and applying Medical Qigong's curative effects based on existing scientific research, and continuing research and deeper study in order to develop a more complete modern Medical Qigong theory.

B. Practical Methods and Skills

The practical methods and skills of Qigong consist of two aspects: executing the three adjustments (body, breath, and mind) and Qigong Gong Fa (功法) or "exercise forms." The exercise forms are the practice patterns by which Qigong knowledge is handed down, and the execution of the three adjustments are its key elements. Therefore, it is necessary to lay a good foundation by becoming adept in the execution of the three adjustments so that while practicing the form you can obtain the essential points of the form directly and achieve

the Qigong state quickly. Thus the execution of the three adjustments is the basic skill for Qigong practice. While practicing the various forms of Medical Qigong, one can thoroughly comprehend the origins, special characteristics, and clinical applications, and realize that achieving the integration state of the three adjustments is the main point of practice. The principle of discarding the dross and selecting the essential also needs to be reiterated, as many schools of Qigong and exercise forms exist from past to the present. More than ten Medical Qigong forms are selected as fundamental exercise forms and will be described in this book, and some specialized methods used to treat specific diseases will be briefly introduced in the clinical section.

C. Clinical Applications

Medical Qigong has two parts: preserving health and treating illness. This text involves mainly the treatment of illness. As a therapy, Qigong is similar to acupuncture and Tuina (massage) in that it belongs to non-chemical Chinese medicine. In Qigong, the TCM principle of *Determining Treatment by Syndrome Differentiation* should be understood as *Determining Qigong Treatment according to Individual Differences and Syndrome Differentiation.* The course of therapy includes teaching, guiding, and examining Qigong exercise forms. It emphasizes encouraging and inspiring the patient. Thus, clinical Qigong conventions share similarities and differences with TCM. At present, the clinical application aspect of Medical Qigong is still in its infancy, as are the establishment of basic standards and laws of Qigong clinical application. In the clinical part of this book we will discuss the scope and working conventions of Medical Qigong therapy and introduce syndrome differentiation and Qigong prescriptions for many kinds of disease.

D. Classic Qigong Literature

Classical Qigong literature is an indispensable source for developing CMQ. A variety of Qigong schools have existed since ancient times, and the relevant literature is scattered throughout various works on traditional Chinese culture, including medicine, religion, philosophy, archaeology, astronomy, history, and even literary works. References may be in the form of academic monographs, chapters, sections, passages, or fragments. As a result, the task of finding, sorting, annotating, and translating the documents is not easy; the difficulty and length of time required is beyond the scope of this book. The same applies to collecting and performing textual research on Qigong cultural relics. As exploration of classical Qigong materials continues, one must pay attention to

advances in information technology such as computers, and try to adopt them in research as soon as possible.

III. Subjects Related to CMQ

As mentioned above, CMQ arose from the combination of TCM and Qigong, each of which is the concern and subject of modern scientific research. The CMQ interfaces with many modern subjects or disciplines, some of which should be considered "external" or extrinsic. The following subjects share inner relationships with CMQ.

A. Classical Chinese Philosophy

TCM and Qigong are rooted in classical Chinese philosophy. In order to better understand the thought process of CMQ and the ancient people's worldview and methodology, it is necessary to have some knowledge of classical Chinese philosophy.

B. Religion

The connection between medicine and shamanism (巫, wu), as well as the connection between Qigong practice and religious cultivation, suggests that CMQ has had some relationship with various forms of religion during different time periods. From the historical viewpoint, TCM and Qigong were separated from the influence of religion and were shaped as independent subjects several thousand years ago. Understanding the relationship between CMQ and religion can help us to understand the history of how Qigong developed from superstition to science.

C. Acupuncture and Tuina

As a healing modality, the position of Qigong in TCM matches that of acupuncture and Tuina. Acupuncture and Tuina—especially acupuncture—cannot be separated from an understanding of the meridians (channels for Qi), and ancient people considered the discovery of the meridians directly related to Qigong. Li Shizhen (李时珍), the famous Ming dynasty doctor and herbalist, said in his *Study on the Eight Extra Meridians* or *Qi Jing Ba Mai Kao* (奇经八脉考, circa 1570),[3] "The inner scenery and channels can only be viewed only by those who reflect inwardly, illuminating the interior through [Daoist/Qigong] meditation." Moreover, acupuncture requires "De Qi" (得气, Reaching or Feeling the Qi), and Tuina needs Qigong exercise to create inner

strength. Obviously, they both have a profound inner connection with Qigong. Additionally, acupuncture and Tuina may reinforce and support Qigong therapy. For example, moxibustion and acupressure can cultivate and strengthen inner Qi. Clinically combined Qigong, acupuncture, and Tuina can result in better treatment outcomes when using the Qi to connect the inner and outer body.

D. Physical Exercise

The difference between Qigong and common physical exercise training is: the former focuses on integrating the three adjustments into one and the latter focuses on each adjustment independently. An expansion of this concept includes the fact that Qigong is meant to bring about a particular psychophysiological state of being, whereas conventional exercise emphasizes body activities. Dynamic Qigong (Dong Gong 動功, Qigong with body movements or activities), compared with Jing Gong 靜功 or static Qigong (in which the body is kept still during postural, breathing, and mental training), seems to be similar in some respects to physical exercise. However, only the physical forms (postures or movement) look similar whereas their intent or nature is different. Comparatively speaking, Qigong emphasizes the importance of the inner body while physical exercise focuses on the outer body. Because of this, the indications and outcomes of the inner body and the physical exercises are different.

E. Psychotherapy

Although Qigong therapy shares some elements with psychotherapy, Qigong goes beyond it. Like Qigong, psychotherapy adjusts the patient's mental state. Its cognitive, behavioral, and hypnotic therapies in particular are similar to Qigong; mostly the similarities are in the skills acquired while adjusting the patient's mental state. Yet Qigong therapy adjusts not only the mind but also the breath and body. Furthermore, Qigong integrates the three adjustments into Oneness. The content of Qigong therapy is broader than that of psychotherapy. In addition, in psychotherapy, patients are relatively passive, such as in hypnotherapy; while Qigong therapy actively encourages patients to restore their health by doing personal exercises under guidance.

F. Natural Medicine

Qigong therapy is part of natural medicine. The scope of natural medicine is very broad and includes many non-medicine therapies, for example dietary therapy, forest therapy, flower scent (aroma) therapy, music therapy, hot spring therapy, and so on. Most of these therapies are derived from folk remedies,

using natural resources, and carried out easily. Not only preserving health, they are also effective for specific illnesses. From the perspective of natural medicine, Qigong therapy could be defined as a method that restores health by developing and utilizing the body's natural potential. It may be used in conjunction with other natural therapies.

IV. The Study of CMQ

It is necessary to learn the basic theory and Qigong forms from textbooks; but it is most important to learn how to practice Qigong. The Qigong state is intrinsic; it is difficult to experience it by reading without practicing. This presents a challenge in the study of CMQ.

A. Enlightened Understanding (Wu Xing, 悟性)[iii]

Learning CMQ requires Qigong study and practice. With regard to Qigong study and practice from the ancient times to the present, many scholars have emphasized the principle of "enlightened understanding" (Wu Xing, 悟性). This term sounds reasonable, yet its meaning has seldom been explained, and it presents a sort of mystery in Qigong practice. As a matter of fact, "enlightened understanding" is not incomprehensible, although it has different layers of meaning. Speaking from a basic epistemological viewpoint, one may regard "enlightening understanding" as a mode of cognition for comprehending things indirectly, through the implications of metaphor, loanwords, symbols, etc. In learning Qigong, this mode of cognition is very popular.

It is well-known that language is symbolic. People are capable of exchanging their experiences of commonly perceived objects through symbols, once these are applied to objects. Generally speaking, it is enough for people to communicate through the direct meaning of the words in normal daily living. However, the communication in Qigong study is different. Qigong expressions focus on the inner experiences and states of the practitioner, which causes outsiders to have difficulty understanding them. This creates challenges in communication. For example, when learning Zhou Tian (周天—"heavenly circuit," the process of circulating Qi along the governor and conception channels, and, sometimes, along the arms and legs as well), many people can accomplish Zhou Tian; however, each experiences his or her own different and individualized Zhou Tian. It is nearly impossible to experience another person's experience. Thus, to communicate such experiences requires indirect explanations, in which

iii Although Wu Xing is often translated as "power of apprehension," we have tried to preserve the Buddhist flavor of the term Wu, connoting awareness, perception, and enlightenment.

common, comprehensible, and observable things are used to illuminate personal inner feelings. Indeed the very concept of Zhou Tian, originally an ancient astronomical term, is metaphorical.

This explains why metaphor, symbol, and loanwords are so common in ancient and modern Qigong literature. The ability to catch the original meaning of a practitioner's expression through indirect methods plays an important role in Qigong learning, while the normal modes of discursive reasoning are not applicable here. Thus comprehension through inference and imagination based on the personal experience of Qigong practice is "enlightened understanding" in Qigong study.

B. Qigong Practice

Another important part in CMQ is Qigong practice. As mentioned above, Qigong is a branch of knowledge acquired through mastery of skills. Qigong theory is derived from Qigong practice and consists of description, analysis, and summary of the practitioner's mental and physical feelings and experiences in Qigong practice. Without Qigong practice, one's grasp of Qigong theory would be limited to empty phrases and hollow concepts. Only through Qigong practice may true understanding of its theory be possible, and in turn, theory may be used to help guide the practice. Theory must serve the practice. Stripping away practice, theory becomes words without substance, an indulgence in exaggeration. Since Qigong practice is the cornerstone of learning Qigong, if one does not master at least one Qigong exercise form, one's Qigong study will equal next to nothing.

From ancient times to the present, there have been numerous Qigong exercise forms. It is impossible and unnecessary to master all of them. This textbook emphasizes Medical Qigong. It is suggested that, based on a general study of the Qigong exercise forms in this book, learners can benefit by selecting one or two of these as important methods to practice with depth and thoroughness, and over a long period of time.

C. Mental Tranquility

Mental Qigong emphasizes maintaining a calm mind state during the course of study. Although other disciplines certainly require avoiding impulsive or impetuous behaviors, CMQ places special emphasis on mental tranquility. The primary reason is that the inner feelings and experiences that accompany Qigong practice are, for the most part, exceedingly subtle. To paraphrase Laozi (fourth-century BC philosopher), this is the realm that is "so nebulous and intangible! Yet within it we find the essence." If the mind is not tranquil, there

is no way to experience or master Qigong. Qigong theories, based on these experiences, are also subtle—if the student cannot make the mind tranquil and tries to learn theory as though reading a novel, he or she will not understand the true meaning. The Qigong literature in this textbook requires meticulous attention. And an attentive mind, one that looks for the essence of a subject, is built on a foundation of tranquility.

In summary, CMQ is an applied subject, with strong theory and practical skills, one that interfaces closely with other disciplines and is still in the early stages of development. To master CMQ, one needs to understand TCM, Qigong, related subjects, and the actual skills and practices of Qigong. One should develop a good command of the theory by reading extensively and reflecting with depth and diligence. Furthermore, training in Qigong assiduously is to experience the Qigong state and strengthen perceptual cognition. In addition, it is important to select and read the classical monographs on Qigong, to explore modern Qigong research methods, and to study new trends in Qigong. All of these are realistic aids for learning CMQ.

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PART I

Fundamental Theories

Part I of this new and revised paperback edition consists of an introduction to the historical development of the practice of Medical Qigong, and a discussion of its development and exploration from ancient times to the present day. It includes a brief history of the classic theories of Qigong and their development, as well as commentary on the modern scientific research on the subject.

CHAPTER 1

The Origins of Qigong and the Major Schools

The origins of Qigong and the major schools are briefly introduced in this chapter. Some important historical materials and facts are presented for Qigong study and for researchers' reference.

1. The Origin of Qigong

Some initial studies indicate that Qigong originated in the self-care and health-preservation methods of primitive cultures. The following phenomena may have been experienced by many: when one is fatigued, yawning and stretching can help one to relax and bring comfort; when one is feeling pain somewhere in the body, subconscious movements such as pressing, rubbing, and pinching may reduce or relieve it.

In ancient times, many different terms were used to label the exercises currently referred to as "Qigong," all of which suggest that Qigong originated in early instinctive attempts to seek health and nurture the body. These terms included *Tuna* (exhalation and inhalation, 吐纳), *Daoyin* (guiding and conducting exercise, 导引), *Anqiao* (massaging/stepping on the body, 按蹻), *Xiulian* (cultivating and refining, 修炼), *Jingzuo* (sitting meditation, 静坐), and *Xingqi* (circulating Qi, 行气). *Tuna* is a form of respiratory exercise to adjust the breathing. *Daoyin* refers to therapeutic or health-preservative physical exercises that involve both the body and the respiratory system more specifically. *Anqiao* means massaging the body, or step-massage. *Xingqi* is the practice of guiding Qi through the meridians through the visualization of "Qi" moving throughout the entire body along the meridians coordinated with breathing.

During the New Stone Age, around 3000–2000 BC, Qigong gradually evolved into a skill or form of exercise that was consciously and intentionally focused on adjusting and training both mind and body. However, there is no literature that directly indicates the precise time that Qigong began and such developments in practice; however, it may be inferred indirectly from the following historical sources and findings.

I. Historical Texts

The earliest Chinese historical books, such as *The Book of Documents* or *Shangshu* (尚书), and later ones such as *Records of the Historian* or *Shiji* (史记) and *Mencius* (Mengzi, 孟子), recorded that the central plains of China were heavily flooded during the Tangyao (唐尧) Period over 4000 years ago. *Ancient Music* or *Guyue* (古乐) and *Springs and Autumns of Master Lu* or *Lushi Chunqiu* (吕氏春秋)[1] noted that, because of Qi and blood stagnation caused by a rainy and humid climate, people were liable to suffer pain and stiffness in the joints and other parts of the body. They danced in order to activate Qi and blood, and thus alleviated pain and sickness. *On Changing Therapies for Curative Effect* from *Plain Questions*, or *Suwen—Yifa Fangyi Lun* (素问 • 异法方宜论) of *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic*,[2] written more than 2000 years ago, in discussing the origin of various therapies of TCM, states that since the central plains of China were flat and humid, coldness in the limbs and diseases of the bones and joints were common, and that these conditions should be treated with *Daoyin* and *Anqiao*. These records suggest that by the Spring–Autumn Period (770–476 BC) ancient dances from the Tangyao Period, designed to activate Qi and blood, had evolved into *Daoyin* and *Anqiao* (导引按蹻), or in modern terms, Medical Qigong.

II. Medical Texts

Plain Questions—On Transforming the Mind and Qi or *Su Wen—Yijing Bianqi Lun* (素问 • 移精变气论)[2] from *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* stated that in ancient times humans lived among wild animals, moved around to avoid the cold, and rested in shady places to evade heat. Internally, they were not troubled by passion or desires and externally were not bothered by ambition. As people were indifferent to fame or gain, pathogenic Qi would not penetrate deeply.

Our ancestors in the New Stone Age lived a tough life in the struggle for survival but were content with their lot. Their simple lifestyle and peaceful mental states kept their metabolism slow, and mood or mind calm, so they were not subject to pathogenic Qi. These were veracious descriptions of primitive Qigong for the purpose of life-nurturing.

III. Archaeological Discoveries

In 1975, relics of the Majiayao Period (马家窑), including a painted pottery jar with a colored relief sculpture in human shape with the posture of "gulping Qi" or "turtle breathing" (服气) to exercise inhalation and expiration on the surface, were unearthed in Liuwan San Pintai, Ledu, Qinghai Province (Figure 1.1). The relic provided evidence for the hypothesis that Chinese Qigong has a history of at least 5000 years.

Figure 1.1 Painted pottery jar with a sculpture in human shape on a standing meditation post, performing gulping Qi exercise. Majiayao Period (around 3000 BCE), Qinghai Province

In 1957, tombs from the New Stone Age were discovered in Sunjiazai, Datong County, Qinghai Province. Among the unearthed cultural relics was an ancient painted pottery basin with a quite distinct and exquisite figure of a black dancing human (Figure 1.2), which clearly suggests a depiction of ancient dance or Daoyin (guiding and pulling). This piece was also dated back to the Majiayao Period (5000 years ago).

Figure 1.2 Ancient painted pottery basin with dancing lines, on which a black dancing human figure was quite distinct, from the tombs of the New Stone Age

Given this historical evidence, we may reasonably conclude that Qigong originated primarily from early attempts to preserve health or prevent sickness. On the other hand, it was to some extent connected with ancient shamanism or shamanic dancing. In the primitive mind, death meant separation of the soul from the body. It was thought that the eternal soul existed in the nether, or Yin, world and would continue to influence the life of the Yang world. The one who would make the connection between Yin and Yang worlds, or between the divine and man, was the shaman.

There was no clear division or differentiation between medicine and shamanism in ancient times; perhaps shamanism was the only medical service available to primitive humans. According to the *Confucian Analects* or *Lunyu* (论语),[3] one could only be considered a shaman after many years of persistent cultivation of what would today be called Qigong. Shamans were supposed to possess certain qualities such as the ability to deliver a clear hint, to concentrate, and to enter tranquility in ancient sacred ceremonies. In addition, they were able to carry out rituals and create a solemn atmosphere by sweeping the ground, laying out cushions, fasting and bathing, getting intoxicated with singing and dancing, or purifying mind and thought without moving the limbs, which is no different from performing static Qigong. In the process of persistent cultivation of Qi, shamans experienced not only pleasant Qigong sensations, enhanced intelligence, and prolonged lives, but also the ability to visualize the internal organs (Zang-Fu), meridians, and acupoints, which helped to advance their medical activities.

Along with social development, the status and nature of the shamans changed dramatically. During the period of feudal society, a few distinguished shamans became rulers and some became "medical" doctors, but most evolved into quacks or swindlers. These charlatans carried out their performances in the name of the medical knowledge and techniques now called Qigong and consequently disgraced the reputation of both medicine and Qigong. Bian Que (扁鹊), the most prominent Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) physician in the Spring–Autumn Period (770–476 BC), set clear rules for his treatment. His "no treatment under six conditions" included the refusal to treat those who believed in shamanism rather than in medicine. In addition, he provided strong proof that shamanism/wizardry and TCM had already become separated by that period.

Early Qin Period alchemy might also be derived from shamanism. In their treatment activities, the witch-doctors had to perform tricks or Gongfu shows with their knowledge of medicine, physics, and chemistry to obtain the trust of their patients. They took objects from boiling oil, emitted smoke and fire from their fingers, climbed mountains of knife blades, and swam in seas of fire. Other

"magical" tricks included killing a ghost and showing its blood, and cutting open the human body without bloodshed.

In summary, although originally Qigong had some connections with shamanism, shamans took advantage of Qigong techniques to make a name for themselves.

2. Traditional Major Qigong Schools

During the long course of historic development, various theories and methods beneficial to the mind and body had been adopted into Qigong. Traditions in medicine, Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and the martial arts, in particular, greatly influenced the development of Qigong. In addition, five distinct traditions or schools were formed with their own theories and characteristics.

I. Medical Qigong

Medical Qigong is the most popular tradition with the fastest development and richest history of all the diverse schools. If the Outwards-Dispersing Dance (Xuandao Wu, 宣导舞) of 3000–2000 BC was the starting date, then it would have had a history of 4000 to 5000 years. If the application of Qi-guiding, pulling, and pressing the body (Daoyin Anqiao, 导引按蹻) recorded in *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* marked the beginning of Medical Qigong, then it has existed for over 2000 years.

It is generally acknowledged that Medical Qigong originated in the Pre-Qin Period, and then progressed during the Eastern and Western Han dynasty. It matured in the Sui and Tang dynasties, and flourished during the Northern and Southern Song and the Jing and Yuan dynasties. It has the following characteristics. (a) The philosophy and theories of TCM guide every aspect of Medical Qigong—the selection of forms, the practice of technique, clinical application, research, etc. (b) Medical Qigong has absorbed what was useful for health from other Qigong traditions. Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, and the martial arts have all been examined for their clinical, health-preserving, and rehabilitative value. (c) Medical Qigong incorporates a multitude of Qigong styles, the most remarkable ones being the Five-Animal Frolics, the Six Syllable Formula, and the Eight Pieces of Brocade.

The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic included profound and detailed explanations of the theory, techniques, and applications of Qigong, which was the developmental foundation for Medical Qigong. Zhang Zhongjing (张仲景), a well-known Han dynasty physician, expanded on the ideas in the *Internal*

Classic and added that Qigong could prevent the progress of disease. Therefore, it could be applied to disease prevention. Hua Tuo (华佗) was a pioneer in Medical Qigong practice with his Life-Simulating Qigong. The Five-Animal Frolics was the first series of dynamic Qigong documented in history; it was developed later on and is still popular today. The cultural relics unearthed from the Mawang Dui archaeological site in Changsha shed light on the development of Medical Qigong in the Han dynasty. For example, the important document *Recipes for Nurturing Life* enriched the theories in *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic*, added some concrete Qigong forms, and elaborated on matters that needed attention during Qigong practice. *Daoyin Illustrations*, also discovered at Mawang Dui, indicated the existence of numerous Qigong forms and their popularity among the people in ancient times. Additional work from this site included *Avoiding Grains and Gulping Qi*, the first monograph that focused on "avoiding grains," or Qi fasting techniques. All this evidence clearly indicates that the Han dynasty was a period during which Medical Qigong experienced fast development, prosperity, and movement toward perfection.

During the Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern dynasties, Medical Qigong expanded further. Ge Hong summarized the medicinal effects of Qigong in his book *Baopu Zi*. He states that the functions of Qigong practice are to "heal developing diseases and dredge discordant Qi." Furthermore, he describes the locations and functions of the lower, middle, and upper elixir fields (Dantian, 丹田) and classifies Qigong forms (as directing Qi style and Daoyin style). Tao Hongjing's *Records Concerning Tending Mind and Prolonging Life* was the first work to describe and illustrate the details of the Five-Animal Frolics, for although Hua Tuo of the Han dynasty is credited as the founder of the Five-Animal Frolics, there is no written record before Tao's. Tao also initiated the Six Syllable Formula in which he integrated the Zang-Fu theory with vocalized breathing. Treatment using external Qi had first appeared during the Jin dynasty and was referred to as spreading the Qi (布气).

Medical Qigong matured during the Sui, Tang, and Five dynasties (the Liang, Jin, Han, and Zhou dynasties). The remarkable achievements of this period were reflected in the *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Disease* by Cao Yuanfang, who emphasizes Qigong treatment only, rather than herbal prescriptions, acupuncture, and Tuina; this indicates that Qigong treatment was accepted by the imperial court and the commonalty. Another medical classic, *Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies* by Sun Simiao, also known as "the King of the Herbs," presents unique views on such Qigong therapies as regulating Qi, which was based on static meditation and massage based on dynamic forms. Sun Simiao was one of the most famous practitioners in TCM history respected for his academic excellence and moral integrity. He emphasized preserving energy and nourishing the body, and himself lived a

102-year life. From these two famous practitioners' medical classics, Medical Qigong matured in this historic period.

Medical Qigong was in full bloom in the Northern, Southern, Jin, and Yuan dynasties, as seen in the masterpiece of this period, *General Collection for Holy Benevolence* (圣济总录).[4] The "four eminent physicians of the Jin and Yuan dynasties" were representative of the high level of Qigong skill achieved by physicians during these dynasties. The Eight Pieces of Brocade, created and popularized in the Song dynasty, was organized according to the principles of Chinese medicine, with each technique ascribed to a definite medical function. It is recognized as a classical example of the application of Qigong exercise according to Chinese Zang-Fu theory and syndrome differentiation.

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, Qigong arrived at a new stage, with more medical experts engaged in Qigong practice. Li Shizhen (李时珍), for example, had a profound understanding of the connections between Qigong and meridian theory. Zhang Jingyue (张景岳), an expert in Qigong techniques, made useful remarks on the relationship between the elixir fields and the gate of vitality as well as between medicine and *The Book of Changes* or *Yijing* (易经). Ye Tianshi, Xue Xue, Shen Jinao (叶天士, 薛雪, 沈金鳌), and other physicians of the Qing dynasty were all proficient in Qigong treatment.

Illustration of Internal Qigong or *Neigong Tushuo* (内功图说), adapted from the *True Essence of Attaining Longevity* or *Shoushi Chuanzhen* (寿世传真) by Xu Wenbi (徐文弼) in 1771, focused on dynamic Qigong and was illustrated by forms such as Eight Pieces of Brocade. It may be considered a modern Qigong monograph.

The Opium War in 1840 brought a halt to the development of Medical Qigong. Subsequently, few new works or famous figures appeared. Fortunately, after the founding of the People's Republic of China, Medical Qigong experienced two successive high tides, in the 1950s and 1980s, followed by the revision of Medical Qigong.

II. Daoist Qigong

Daoist Qigong can be traced back to the ancient Qin dynasty philosophers Laozi (老子) and Zhuangzi (庄子). Religious Daoism, which came into existence after the Han dynasty, was an integration of philosophical Daoist theory and practice. It gradually became a perfected and expanded philosophical Daoist Qigong system. Daoist Qigong emphasized the cultivation of both human life (Ming) and spirituality (Xing). Its major achievement was the development of the internal elixir Qigong techniques, best represented by Zhou Tian Gong

(Heavenly Circulation) Qigong, sometimes called micro- and macrocosmic orbit in the West.

The *Dao De Jing* (or *Tao Te Ching* in some translations) is considered the earliest work of philosophical Daoist Qigong. It expounds on the Dao of the universe (Tiandao, 天道), the Dao of governing a nation (Zhidao, 治道), and the Dao of morality (Rendao, 人道), as well as the relationships among them. The *Dao De Jing* laid the theoretical foundation for Daoist Qigong. Zhuangzi expanded on Laozi's theories, including the often quoted Qigong principle of "uniting heaven and the human into one" (Tian Ren He Yi). In one chapter of his book *On Leveling All Things* or *Qiwu Lun* (齐物论) Zhuangzi writes, "Heaven and earth exist with me; the universe and I are one." Zhuangzi not only devoted himself to practicing a purely spiritual meditative Qigong but studied dynamic Qigong skills as well. In the chapter "Ke Yi" (刻意), he proposed that one learned "To huff and puff, inhale and exhale, blow out the old and breathe in the new, do the 'bear-hang' and the 'bird-stretch.'" These ideas were believed to have had a crucial influence on the physician Hua Tuo when he was creating the Five-Animal Frolics centuries later.

The art of internal elixir is representative of Daoist Qigong. *Concordance of the Three According to the Classic of Changes* (周易参同契)[5] by Wei Boyang (魏伯阳) of the Eastern Han dynasty is believed to be the earliest monograph on the art of internal elixir, and is highly praised as "the King of the Ancient Classics of internal elixir." Towards the end of the Tang dynasty and the Five dynasties, a group of pioneers of the practice of the internal elixir techniques emerged. They were known as "the Zhong Lu Division" and were represented by Zhong Liquan (钟离权), Lu Yan (吕岩), Shi Jianwu (施肩吾), Cui Xifan (崔希范), Liu Haichan (刘海蟾), and Chen Tuan (陈抟).

Daoist Qigong emphasized the importance of the body's three treasures—essence (Jing 精), Qi, and spirit (Shen 神)—spirit in particular. The dominant role of the spirit was elucidated in *The Yellow Court Classic* (黄庭经) and other books written during the period of the Wei, Jing, and the Southern and Northern dynasties. The "three palaces of the yellow court," discussed in the book, was an embryonic version of the three elixir fields. Contemporaries of the author of the *The Yellow Court Classic*, including Ge Hong (葛洪) and Tao Hongjing (陶弘景), were physicians as well as Daoist Qigong practitioners. They were dedicated to the promotion of the combination of Daoism and Medical Qigong.

During the Jin and Yuan dynasties a large number of followers of internal elixir Qigong emerged who devoted themselves to practice, research, and writing. With enhanced theory and practical forms, internal elixir Qigong gradually developed into a major division of Qigong.

Zhang Boduan of the Northern Song dynasty, an advocate of the internal elixir art, expounded on internal elixir theory and discussed his own experiences in the *Awakening to the Truth* (悟真篇).[6] He was later recognized as one of the founders of the internal elixir art, and his work became one of the two masterpieces of internal elixir cultivation along with *Concordance of the Three According to the Classic of Changes* (周易参同契).[5]

A large amount of valuable Qigong literature was found in the extant *Seven Tablets from the Cloudy Satchel* or *Yunji Qijian* (云笈七笺),[7] collected by Zhang Junfang (张君房) in the Northern Song dynasty, regarded as an outstanding Song dynasty text in the Daoist Canon and which won the title of "Minor Dao Collection" (小道藏). The southern branch of the internal elixir art asserts that physical preservation (Ming Gong) should precede spiritual cultivation (Xin Gong). In addition, the Qigong cultivation started with Essence-Qi (Jing Qi) in the lower elixir field. The northern branch, however, holds the opposite opinion, believing that Qigong cultivation started with the spirit in the upper elixir field.

Internal elixir Qigong reached a level of maturity in theory and practice during the Ming dynasty and advanced even further in the Qing dynasty. This period included several representative figures. Zhang Sanfeng (张三丰) wrote *Plain Illustration of Mystic Arts* or *Xuanji Zhijiang* (玄机直讲),[8] a book on the art of internal elixir.[i] Lu Xixing (陆西星), founder of the eastern branch of internal elixir Qigong, inherited the southern branch and adopted the idea of cultivating Yin and Yang. Li Xiyue (李西月), founder of the western branch, proposed remaining tranquil and natural. Wu Shouyang (伍守阳) wrote the *Authentic Treatise on the Plain Explications of Immortal Way* or *Tianxian Zhengli Zhilun* (天仙正理直论)[9] and finalized the essential forms of internal elixir Qigong.

There were also contemporary experts in internal elixir Qigong. Chen Yingning (陈樱宁), for example, founded the Institute of Immortality Study (Xianxie Yuan, 仙学院) and published Immortality Study Daily and Immortality Study serials with the intention of imparting internal elixir Qigong to his pupils. Some modern books illustrated the circulation of internal Qi related to internal elixir Qigong as well. *Chart of Internal Classic* or *Neijing Tu* (内经图), *Illustration of Cultivating the Truth* or *Xiu Zhen To* (修真图), *Illustration of Completing the Elixir Through the Nine Revolution Process* or *Dan Cheng Jiu Zhuan To* (丹成九转图), and *Refining Spirit and Cultivating the True Fully Illustrated* or *Lian Xing Xiu Zhen Quan Tu* (炼性修真全图) all vividly depict Qi circulation from the perspective of internal elixir Qigong.

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i Zhang is a semi-legendary figure, and the attribution of literary works or arts such as Taiji Quan to him are matters of some controversy since there is no literature to confirm it.

III. Buddhist Qigong

Buddhism came to China from India in the early Eastern Han dynasty. The following dynasties, the Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern, saw its rapid expansion, and in the Sui and Tang dynasties, Buddhism reached its peak.

Besides religious benefits, the mind and body cultivation and breathing regulation from the physical and mental health aspects of Buddhism are similar to Qigong practice. This is the background of Buddhist Qigong. Emphasizing spiritual cultivation or focusing on the cultivation of human spirituality by adjusting the mind and the breathing is the characteristic of Buddhist Qigong. Most of its forms, accordingly, are static, typically involving prolonged and intense contemplation (Zen meditation), as in Yinshi Zi's Tranquil Sitting.

The Contemplation Sutra or *An Ban Shou Yi Jing* (安般守意经), translated into Chinese by An Shigao (安世高) at the end of the Eastern Han dynasty, was probably one of the earliest Chinese Buddhist scriptures on prolonged and intense contemplation and mind cultivation. At the end of the Wei dynasty, the Indian or Persian monk Bodhidharma came to China to preach Buddhism. He asserted "two accesses," access through theory and access through practice—the integration of cultivation theory with cultivation practice. He also advocated the "wall-gazing" technique (Bi Guan): facing a wall in solitude and remaining speechless all day. This method enriched Qigong exercises, with special relevance to the practice of mind adjustment. A contemporary of Bodhidharma was Tan Luan (昙鸾). He was a distinguished monk in the northern Wei of Pure Land Buddhism (Jingtu Zhong, 净土宗), and studied Qigong under Daoist priest Tao Hongjing (陶弘景). After years of intensive practice, he mastered the advanced skills of Qigong and could diagnose according to a patient's complexion. In addition, he created the treatment method, using Intent to Direct Qi (Yiyi Yin Qi, 以意引气), which is still in use today.

In the Sui and Tang dynasties Buddhism reached its peak, and so did Buddhist Qigong. This was manifested by the fact that many Confucians, Daoists, and medical experts started believing in Buddhism and began practicing Buddhist Qigong. This resulted in interchange and interpenetration among various Qigong schools and traditions.

The efforts of a group of eminent monks perfected and enriched Buddhist Qigong both in theory and in practice and pushed Qigong progress forward academically as well. The fourth Chinese Chan (Zen) master and true founder of the Buddhist Tiantai sect, Zhiyi (智顗), contributed greatly to the development of Buddhist Qigong. His opinions were collected in his four monographs on *Vipasyana*, or contemplation: *Primary Shamatha and Vipasyana* or *Tong Meng Zhiguan* (童蒙止观),[10] *Six Marvelous Dharma Gates* or *Luimiao Famen* (六妙法门), *Explanation of the Graduated Dharma Method of Dhyanaparamita* or *Shichan*

Buoluomi Cidi Famen (释禅波罗蜜次第法门), and *The Great Vipasyana* or *Mohe Zhiguan* (摩诃止观).

Indian Esoteric Buddhism (Mi Zong, 密宗) spread into China during the Tang dynasty. Three eminent monks during the Kaiyuan (开元) Period—Vajrabodhi (Jingangzhi, 金刚智), Shubhakarasimha (Shanwuwei, 善无畏), and Bu Kong (不空)—came successively to China to teach Esoteric Buddhism. As Tibet was where Esoteric Buddhism thrived, the sect was usually referred to as Tibetan Esoteric Buddhism (Zang Mi, 藏密).

After the Ming dynasty, there was a growing tendency for the three religious Qigong sects to merge. Han Shan, a distinguished monk, proposed blending Zen Buddhism and Huayan Buddhism (华严宗) as well as merging Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism. This new trend in the development of traditional Qigong was reflected in many Qigong forms with the intermingling characters of two or three schools.

In modern times, Buddhist Qigong has influenced the creation of more forms of practice. Sitting meditation introduced in *Amplification on Sitting Meditation* or *Jingzuofa Jingyi* (静坐法精义) by a secular Buddhist devotee, Ding Fubao (丁福保), and in *Yinshi Zi's Tranquil Sitting* or *Yinshi Zi Jingzuofa* (因是子静坐法) by Jiang Weiqiao (蒋维乔) are, in fact, traditional Buddhist Qigong forms. Similarly, Internal Nourishing Qigong (内养功), employed in the Beidai He Qigong Sanitarium, was adapted from Buddhist Qigong, which was influenced by Daoist and Medical Qigong.

IV. Confucian Qigong

Confucian Qigong began in the early Qin dynasty. Its classic work, *The Book of Changes* (周易), covered many aspects of Qigong and was often used for reference by other Qigong schools. Confucius and his students were the earliest advocates and practitioners of Confucian Qigong. They regarded practicing Qigong and cultivating the mind as two of the prerequisites to governing the State well and maintaining world peace. They also made active efforts to seek out new Qigong exercises suitable for Confucian students and scholars. Sitting and forgetting (Zuo Wang) and mind fasting (Xin Zhai), considered by Guo Moruo as the beginning of sitting meditation, came from Confucius and his students. The idea of cultivating the "noble spirit," put forth by Mencius in the Warring States Period, brought a new maturity to the pursuit of Confucian Qigong.

In the two Han dynasties, both religious Daoism and Buddhism absorbed theories and practices from Confucian Qigong. The emergence of Daoism and the dissemination of Buddhism eastwards provided a basis for the advance of

Confucian Qigong by blending the theories and the practices of both Daoist and Buddhist Qigong into its own. Liu An (刘安) pointed out in the *Huai Nan Zi* (淮南子)[11] that everything in the world is made up of Qi, and explained the interrelationships of the human body shape, Qi, and spirit. In terms of Qigong forms, he favored tranquility: "With regard to spirit and Qi, being tranquil helps store them and enables one to be strong, while being impulsive consumes them and makes one weak." Analyzing the dialectical relationship between the static and dynamic styles of Qigong, he maintained that dynamic and static forms vary in function. In *Sermon on the Origin of Universe* or *Shuzhen Xun* (俶真训), we read: "A tranquil mind and indifference to fame or gain cultivate one's nature." And in *Sermon on Essence and Spirit* or *Jingshen Xun* (精神训) he says: "…do the 'bear-hang' and the 'bird-stretch', swim as the mallard, leap as the ape, raise your head to gaze like the owl, and turn around to stare like the tiger, so as to keep the body in shape…" His opinions enriched Confucian Qigong and laid the foundation for the Tranquil Spirit Sect (or Branch; Jingshen Pai, 静神派, short for Achieve Tranquility by Nourishing Spirit Sect, 静以养神派), as well as the school of Health Preserving Qigong called Use Movement to Nurture the Body (literally "shape") Sect (Dongxing Pai, 动形派, short for 动以养形派).

In the Wei, Jin, and the Southern and Northern dynasties, Ji Kang (嵇康) and Ruan Ji (阮籍) discussed the relationships among body shape, spirit, mind, and substance from the perspective of original Qi (Yuan Qi, 元气). They brought an end to the conflicts among certain schools and provided significant guidance for later Qigong practitioners.

The rationalistic philosophies of Song and Ming dynasty Confucianism brought Confucian Qigong to a climax. This period carried on the ideas of Confucius and Mencius and produced many scholars, represented by Shao Yong (邵雍), Zhou Dunyi (周敦颐), Cheng Hao (程颢), Cheng Yi (程颐), and Zhu Xi (朱熹) in the Song dynasty, and Wang Yangming (王明阳) and his students in the Ming dynasty.

Shao Yong (邵雍), Confucian scholar and founder of the Image-Number School (Xiang Shu Pai, 象数派), adopted the idea of the Prenatal Diagram (Xiantian Tu, 先天图) from Chen Tuan and described the concept of "Taiji" (Supreme Ultimate or Undifferentiated Unity, a term also used in the martial art Taiji Quan) and "Dao" in his books *Universal Principles of Cosmos Changes* or *Huangji Jingshi* (皇极经世)[12] and *Ji Rang Ji* (击壤集). Moreover, he was a Qigong practitioner.

Zhou Dunyi (周敦颐) adapted the *Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate* or *Taiji Tu* (太极图), a philosophical work of Daoist cosmology, from *The Wu Ji Pattern* (The Limitless Void) or *Wuji Tu* (无极图), a book on the theory of internal elixir art by Cheng Tuan. Because of his emphasis on tranquility, Zhou was known as the founder of the Tranquility branch (Zhujing Pai, 主静派).

The great Ming dynasty Confucian scholar Wang Shouren (王守仁) wrote *A Record of Practice and Study* or *Chuanxi Lu* (传习录)[13] in the format of questions and answers. Topics include the relationships among essence, Qi, and mind and between dynamic and static Qigong. Current Qigong practitioners frequently quote his sayings; for example, "Static does not imply immobile, and dynamic does not imply non-static."

The Confucian tradition declined after the Song and Ming dynasties, though some Confucian scholars still performed Qigong exercises. Very little remains of traditional Confucian Qigong.

V. Martial Arts Qigong

Martial Arts Qigong may, at its origin, be related to the life-simulating Daoyin recorded in the early Qin dynasty. In fact, Martial Arts Qigong and Medical Qigong started from the same practice with the following body adjustments: adjust the shape, the posture, and the movement of the body. However, they were different in the later development. The purpose of Martial Arts Qigong practice was to protect the self and capture the enemy, focusing outward on the body; the intention of Medical Qigong practice was inward to cultivate health and to prevent illness. Therefore, Martial Arts Qigong attached great importance to the body's physical shape or form and included methods to train the tendons, bones, muscles, and skin. This tradition involved a large number of hard physical exercising and conditioning, requiring an integration of the Yi (intent), Qi (energy), and Li (force). It follows that major principles are "Use intent to lead the Qi," and "Physical force (Li) accompanies Qi." *The Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic* or *Yijin Jing* (易筋经) and *Shaolin Internal Qigong* or *Shaolin Neigong* (少林内功) are representations of Martial Arts Qigong forms.

"Practice the 'bear-hang' and the 'bird-stretch'" recorded in *Zhuang Zi* (庄子), and the six movements imitating animals in *Huainanzi* (淮南子) may be precursors of Martial Arts Qigong. The *Daoyin Illustrations* (导引图) unearthed at Mawang Dui also demonstrated some features of Martial Arts Qigong, and the instruments used for Daoyin, such as stick, plate, belt, and bag, directly indicated the components of Martial Arts Qigong.

Certain elements of the martial arts component were found in the dynamic form of Qigong including Medical Qigong, Buddhist Qigong, and Daoist Qigong through all dynasties. *The Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic* or *Yijin Jing* (易筋经) was a representative work of the Martial Arts Qigong form. It was created by Persian monk Bodhidharma in the Southern and Northern dynasty and was applied by the monks in Shaolin Temple as a practice form for strengthening the body, eliminating illness, and preventing disease in addition

to sitting meditation. By the time of Sun Si Miao (孙思邈) in the Tang dynasty, there were many descriptions of Martial Arts Qigong movements, such as "move both fists forcibly as to break up a hard stone," and "box both fists ahead as if to pull a strong bow," in the chapter "Massage Method of Ancient Indian Brahman" or "Tianzhu Guo An Mo Fa" (天竺国按摩法) from the book *Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies* or *Bei Ji Qian Jin Yao Fang* (备急千金要方). With the spread of the Eight Pieces of Brocade after the Song dynasty, Martial Arts Qigong entered a stage of fairly rapid development. In the northern branch, the Martial Eight Pieces of Brocade (Wu Baduan, 武八段) were associated with the famous general and martial artist Yue Fei (岳飞) and thus belonged to Martial Arts Qigong. Martial Arts Qigong called for sturdy and vigorous movements. Also, the horse-riding stance (Ma Bu) was used in many of the postures. Even the Literary (mild) Eight Pieces of Brocade (Wen Baduan, 文八段) adopted some movements from the martial arts. The E-Mei 12 Stances were attributed to Zen master Baiyun (White Cloud Chanshi, 白云禅师) in the Southern Song dynasty and has been handed down to our day. The whole system comprised 12 different stances: Tianzi (Chinese character Tian, 天), Dizi (Chinese character Di, 地), Zhizi (Chinese character Zhi, 之), Xinzi (Chinese character Xin, 心), etc. It was difficult to practice. Chen Wangting, also known as Chen Yuting (陈玉廷), a general who lived at the end of the Ming dynasty and the beginning of the Qing dynasty, created Taiji Quan ("Tai Chi" as it is known in the West). Its unique characteristics, such as the emphasis on internal energy and flexibility, enlarged the scope of Martial Arts Qigong.

Martial Arts Qigong has been developed well and is very popular in modern times. In the 1920s, *Collection of Martial Art* or *Wushu Huizong* (武术汇宗) by Wan Laisheng (万籁声) and *An Esoterica on Refining and Conducting Qi* or *Lianqi Xinggong Miji* (练气行功秘籍) by Zhang Qinglin (张庆霖), as well as many other works, all included information about Qigong. The currently popular Martial Arts Qigong forms are derived primarily from the practice of standing on wooden stakes, such as Chen Family Qigong (陈家门气功), E-Mei 12 Stances (峨眉十二桩), and the Yi Quan (Intent Boxing) Standing Post (意拳站桩功).

Chen Family Qigong was a folk Qigong form popular in northern China. It was popularized through the efforts of Tianjin martial arts master Wang Chengjiu (王澄久). Particular postures are held while in a semi-squat. At the same time, the hands perform martial art actions, such as holding, covering, raising, pushing, maneuvering, etc. The method of breath adjustment involves a snoring sound called Inhaling through the Root of the Nose (Shangen Naqi Fa, 山根纳气法), requiring long inhalations and short blowing exhalations, all said to nourish internal Qi. In Chen Family Qigong, these methods are complemented by various body patting (or light slapping) styles: Patting Eight

Trigrams (Cao Bagua, 操八卦), that is, patting different parts of the body; patting the back (Cao Bei, 操背); and two practitioners patting each other.

The E-Mei 12 Stances are attributed to Zen master Baiyun (White Cloud Chanshi, 白云禅师) in the Southern Song dynasty and has been handed down to our day. The whole system comprises 12 different stances: Tianzi (Chinese character Tian, 天), Dizi (Chinese character Di, 地), Zhizi (Chinese character Zhi, 之), Xinzi (Chinese character Xin, 心), Longhe (the style of dragon and crane), Youlong (moving or swimming dragon), Hexiang (flying crane), Nayun (holding the cloud), Xuanfeng (whirlwind), Dazi (Chinese character Da, 大), Xiaozi (Chinese character Xiao, 小), and Youming (secluded and lustrous).

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CHAPTER 2

Classical Theories

Through a long history of dissemination and development, ancient Qigong gradually split and grouped into various schools and traditions. The major traditions include Buddhist, Daoist, Confucian, Medical, and Martial Arts Qigong; the most notable are Buddhism, Daoism, and Medical Qigong. The following is a brief introduction to the theories of the major Qigong traditions with the focus on Medical Qigong.

1. Theories of Medical Qigong

Modern Chinese Medical Qigong grew out of ancient Medical Qigong. Therefore, the theory of ancient Medical Qigong is the precursor of modern Chinese Medical Qigong. Based on the fundamental theories of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), modern Chinese Medical Qigong theories concern the principles, forms or methods, and practical and clinical application of Qigong with the aim of constructing treatment rationales and interpreting various life phenomena. The theories of ancient Medical Qigong include the Yin-Yang Five Elements Theory, Essence-Qi-Spirit Theory, Zang-Xiang Theory, and Meridians and Qi-Blood Theory. Since the theories of ancient Medical Qigong are explained thoroughly in the textbook *Fundamental Theories of Chinese Medicine*, this chapter only introduces them briefly, but focuses on the application of those theories to Qigong practice and the difference from TCM.

I. Theory of Yin-Yang and the Five Elements

A. Yin-Yang and the Five Elements Constitute a Model of Nature, Society, and Human Life

In ancient times, people observed the weather, astronomical phenomena, and the landscape, and associated them with corresponding human activities and relationships, gradually forming philosophical concepts and categories through abstract summarization, analogy, deduction, and comprehensive analysis. Among these are the theory of prenatal Qi, which is concerned with the materiality of the world; the theory of Dao, which centers on the law of objective truth; the theory of Taiji with regard to the origin of the universe; and categories such as matter, movement, time, space, and quantitative change versus qualitative change, contradiction, and the negation of negation. The model of Yin-Yang and the Five Elements comprises all these concepts.

Ancient people believed that the universe originated from "Taiji," which then engendered the two elementary forms (Liang Yi, 两仪), that is, Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang produced the four emblematic symbols (Si Xiang, 四相) from which the Five Elements, Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water, evolved. The four emblematic symbols further engendered the Eight Trigrams (Bagua, 八卦), which led to the formation of 64 hexagrams from which the myriad of things in the universe evolved.

This mathematic model could be used to interpret the phenomena of human life and expresses the notion that the universe developed and evolved from simple to complex. As the *Valuable Experiences on Chinese Medicine from Four Sages* or *Sisheng Xinyuan* (四圣心源)[1] states:

> Before Yin and Yang began to be distinguished from one another, holistic Qi diffused vastly. There had been Yin and Yang in the Qi; the lucid Yang ascended and the turbid Yin descended… When Yin and Yang separated, two elementary forms came into existence… The lucid Qi spun left and up to become Fire, while the turbid Qi spun right and down to become Water… The lucid Qi that ascended halfway turned not to Fire but to Wood, whose Qi is warm in nature. If it continued ascending, Wood would heat up and turn into Fire. The turbid Qi that descended halfway turned not to Water but to Metal, whose Qi is cold in nature. If it continued descending, the Metal would cool down and turn into Water. Water, Fire, Metal and Wood are the four emblematic symbols generated by the ascending and descending of the Yin and Yang. And Yin and Yang themselves resulted from the ascent and descent of middle Qi (spleen-Qi, which stands for Earth). Water, Fire, Metal and Wood are called the four emblematic symbols when separated, and

> Yin and Yang when combined. These are called Yin and Yang when separated, but they are just a variation of middle Qi when put together. The spinning wheel of the four emblematic symbols completes the four seasons of a year… It becomes Spring when Yang ascends halfway, Summer when Yang ascends fully, Autumn when Yin descends halfway, and Winter when Yin descends fully. [Everything is] born in the Spring, grows in the Summer owing to the Qi of Wood and Fire…and gets harvested in the Autumn and stored in the Winter owing to the Qi of Metal and Water… The four emblematic symbols, together with Earth, constitute the Five Elements.

It can be seen from these statements that Yin-Yang and the Five Elements might merely be a set of symbols used by the ancient people to describe the periodic variation of the climate, the growing cycle of plants, and the rhythmic metabolic changes in the human body based on the idea of the lucid Yang ascending and the turbid Yin descending. It is a hypothesis about the laws of the movement of things in the universe.

B. Yin-Yang, Five Elements, and Qigong

1. Yin-Yang as a Guide to Qigong Practice

Ancient people said that, in practicing Qigong, one must "have a profound insight into Yin and Yang" (from *Awakening to the Truth* or *Wu Zhen Pian*, 悟真篇[2]). "Ancient people who had knowledge of Dao followed the rule of Yin and Yang in compatibility with the celestial figures; they controlled their eating habits, regulated their daily activities, never being compulsive or over-exerted. Therefore, they were able to preserve both their physical health and mental ability and live up to a hundred years. On the other hand, those who consume alcohol as if drinking water, often exert themselves and go to sleep while drunk damage, even use up, their original essence and their health declines when they are fifty (half of a hundred)" (*Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* or *Huangdi Neijing*, 黄帝内经).

The first step of Qigong practice is choosing an appropriate method or form, as "People are classified into lesser Yin (Shaoyin), greater Yi Yin (Taiyin), lesser Yang (Shaoyang), greater Yang (Taiyang), and balanced Yin-Yang five types or groups. Each differs in shape, muscles, bones, Qi and blood." For patients, Yin or Yang hyperactivity or deficiency in particular should be distinguished so that different Qigong forms can be assigned to different individuals to achieve the optimal results.

The actual process of choosing Qigong forms for preserving health and treating illness is also guided by the Yin-Yang Five Element theory, and a few

forms can be combined accordingly to achieve the optimal result of Qigong practice for different individuals and disease patterns. For example, the Qigong forms for nourishing Yin and reducing Yang can be used for the pattern of Yin deficiency and Yang excess and coordinated with the methods of "Simultaneously moving the tongue around the teeth root to produce saliva and swallowing it slowly (Jiaohai tunjin, 搅海吞津)" and "contemplating or imagining ice and snow (Cunxiang bingxue, 存想冰雪)." Qigong forms for benefitting Yang and reducing Yin can be chosen for the pattern of Yang deficiency and Yin excess and coordinated with the method of "holding breath to produce heat (Biqi Fare Fa, 闭气发热法)" and "contemplating and imagining Fire and heat (Cunxiang Huore Fa, 存想火热法)."

When practicing Qigong, adjusting the body in motion and stillness, opening and closing, relaxing and tightening, being soft and hard, bending and stretching, and ascending and descending pertain to either Yang or Yin. Generally speaking, dynamic Qigong forms pertain to Yang while static Qigong forms pertain to Yin. Ascending and opening upwards and outwards elevates Yang, while descending and closing downwards and inwards restrains it. *Collections on Medicine* or *Yixue Huihan* (医学汇函)[3] records that "People suffering from pathogenic Fire should practice Qigong with their eyes open while people without the pathogenic Fire may do it with their eyes closed. When practicing Qigong, a person can guide the Qi upwards to treat ear, eye, mouth or nose diseases by bending his body backwards; treat the head disease by raising his head; and treat the diseases below the waist by focusing on the feet."

Yin and Yang also guide the adjustment of breath. Breathing in pertains to Yang, while breathing out pertains to Yin. *A Miraculous Canon on Long Life through the Original Qi* or *Changsheng Taiyuan Shenyong Jing* (长生胎元神用经)[4] records the following: "fresh Qi taken in through the nose is Yang while the turbid Qi coming out from the mouth is Yin…" Holding the breath to retain Qi can eliminate cold, and breathing out turbid Qi can clear heat. Therefore, people with Yang deficiency should focus on breathing in, prolonging the act of inhaling. People with Yin deficiency should focus on breathing out, prolonging the act of exhaling.

Adjusting the mind also involves changes of Yin-Yang. Keeping the mind in focus (意守) and mental-visualization practice especially are fully characterized by variations of Yin and Yang. Focusing on external sight can remove heat Fire, while focusing on internal sight can warm Yang. Imagining a scene of Water and coldness can supplement Yin, while a mental-visualizing scene of Fire and heat can elevate Yang. As *Wen Shi Daoist Canon* or *Wenshi Zhenjing* (文始真经)[5] stated: "Qi is induced by the mind… [In] contemplating a big Fire inwardly, heat will be felt; [in] contemplating a flood inwardly, cold feelings

will ensue." *An Illustrated Explanation of Internal Qigong* or *Nei Gong Tu Shuo* (内功图说) said: "keep the mind on the elixir often to balance the Water and Fire within, so the mind is strong and Qi is sufficient that the evil will stay away"; and: "if one can adjust the breathing, moving the Qi downward to the sea of the Qi (lower elixir) and upwards to Niwan (upper elixir), then the Qi is harmonized and the mind is tranquilized, the Water and the Fire communicate well, and thus it is complete practice and real nourishment." This is the function of minor cycle or Zhou Tian.

Traditional Qigong practitioners have made it a rule to nurture life or preserve health by taking the time variation of Yin and Yang, as well as the four seasons, into account. "Nourish Yang in spring and summer, and nourish Yin in autumn and winter." In regard to the 12 two-hour periods (时辰), practicing Qigong fosters Yang during the six Yang time-periods (from 11 pm to 11 am) and Yin during the six Yin time-periods (from 11 am to 11 pm).

2. Five Elements as a Guide to Qigong Therapy

The five Zang organs, liver, heart, spleen, lung, and kidney, correspond respectively to the Five Elements. Applying the generating and restricting relationships of the Five Element theory into the breathing adjustment in Qigong can adjust the Zang-Fu organs' function. In a clinical setting, the Six Syllable Formula is guided by the Five Elements theory. Two concrete methods, introduced in *Inspection of the Pulses* or *Maiwang* (脉望) by Zhao Taiding (赵台鼎),[6] have been used, both of them based on the generating and restricting relationships among the Five Elements.

The first method is used to treat deficiencies caused by excess in the preceding Zang-Fu organ. For example, excess lung Qi resulting in liver Qi deficiency can be released by uttering the "SI" sound, which corresponds to lung Qi. Excess kidney Qi leading to heart Qi deficiency can be released by uttering the "CHUI" sound. Excess spleen Qi resulting in kidney Qi deficiency can be released by the "HU" sound. Excess liver Qi leading to spleen Qi deficiency can be released by the "XU" sound.

The second method is used to treat excess syndromes of the Zang-Fu organs under the principle of "Release the subsequent (子) Qi in an excessive syndrome" according to the generating and restricting relationships of the Five Elements. For example, "XU" is employed to release excessive liver Qi. But when "XU" fails to do so, then releasing its sequential, the heart Qi, by uttering "HE" will cause the heart Qi to circulate, thus activating the liver Qi. Similarly, when the "HE" sound fails to release excessive heart Qi, releasing its sequential Qi, spleen Qi, by uttering the "HU" sound will cause the spleen Qi to circulate to activate the heart Qi. In turn, when the "HU" sound fails to release the spleen

Qi, release its sequential Qi, kidney Qi, by uttering "CHUI," which will activate the spleen Qi once it starts to circulate. And when "CHUI" fails to release the kidney Qi, release its sequential Qi, liver Qi, by uttering the "XU" sound; when the liver Qi starts to circulate it may activate the kidney Qi.

Liu Hejian (刘河间), one of the four distinguished physicians during the Jin and Yuan Periods, used similar techniques in his own application of the Six Syllable Formula.

The five emotions, anger, joy, thinking, sadness, and fear, also correspond respectively to the Five Elements. Applying the relationship between the five emotional factors into the adjustment of the mind in Qigong practice according to the Five Element theory can treat certain illnesses. Adjusting the mind is the best medicine in treating the diseases according to ancient experts of health preservation. *Plain Questions—The Chapter of Pain* or *Su Wen—Ju Tong Lun* (素问 • 举痛论) says: "anger causes the Qi to go upward, joy causes the Qi to move slower, sadness reduces the Qi, fear causes the Qi to go downward, frightened scatters the Qi, and thinking causes the Qi to become knotted." Here it is stated that excessive emotion leads to Qi turbulence, even symptoms of Qigong deviation. "Sadness overcomes anger," "fear overcomes joy," "anger overcomes thinking," "joy overcomes worry," and "thinking overcomes fear," as stated in *Plain Questions—The Chapter of Yin/Yang Corresponding with Astrology* or *Su Wen—Yin/Yang Ying Xiang Da Lun* (素问 • 阴阳应象大论), explains the generating and restricting relationship of the five emotion elements clearly, which is a very important part of adjusting the mind in Qigong practice. Zhang Zihe (张子和) created concrete treatment methods according to "Controlling Cycle of Five Element Theory" in *Confucians' Duties to Their Parents* or *Ru Men Shi Qin* (儒门事亲), saying: "Sadness can treat anger by touching the person and calming down his/her anger with a sad story, joy can treat sadness by distracting one's mind with joyful or joking talk, fear can treat joy by scaring one with death, anger can treat thinking by insulting and humiliating, thinking can treat fear by leading one's focus on another thought." With this mind-adjusting method, "joy and anger can be balanced," and the state of tranquilized mind and harmonized Qi can be achieved. However, it is quite difficult to apply this method unless one is very knowledgeable.

II. Zang-Fu (Visceral Manifestation) and Meridian Theory

A. Zang-Fu and Meridian Theory (Zang-Xiang (脏象))

The theory of Zang-Fu, or visceral manifestation theory, is a hierarchical model of the structure of the human body based on the Yin-Yang/Five Elements theory. The five Zang organs—liver, heart, spleen, lung, and kidney—

correspond respectively to the Five Elements—Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. They constitute a hierarchical and stable system of orderly generation and restriction and thus a model of the stable mechanisms of the human body. Qigong practice is intended to balance the functions of the Zang-Fu organs, to avoid the occurrence of hyperactivity or deficiency of any of them, and to keep the entire system stable by coordinating the functions of the Zang-Fu organs.

The Zang-Fu organs are inside the body, but they have corresponding figures, symbols, or appearances outside the body. "The outside mirrors the inside." Thus, the conditions of the internal organs can be examined by observing the outside, and the function of the organs inside can be regulated by adjusting the outside form and structure. That is why it is named "Zang-Xiang" (脏象). The scientific aspect of the theory of Zang and Xiang can be explained in the modern theory of the "black box." Based on the ancient anatomy of the human body using the theory of Yin-Yang and the Five Elements, the Zang-Xiang theory reveals some content within the "black box," which is the relationship and interactions of all the functional systems, but which is not yet totally clear and completed. Therefore, it is only the model of a "gray box."

B. Zang-Fu, Meridians, and Qigong

1. Zang-Fu Theory and Qigong

According to TCM the heart governs the spirit, mind, and blood, and it is regarded as governor of the entire body. It is only after the heart and mind are appropriately nourished that body function and coordination can be sound. As the *Secret Classic Collected in the Imperial Library* from *Plain Questions* or *Suwen—Linglan Midian Lun* (素问 • 灵兰秘典论)[7] states, "If the king (the mind) is judicious, his courtiers (the 12 Zang-Fu organs) will work efficiently. Longevity ensues if one lives in this way." In contrast, "If the king (the mind) is injudicious, his 12 courtiers (the Zang-Fu organs) will not be normal… Harm ensues if one lives in this way."

Practicing Qigong can purify the heart (mind) and nourish the spirit by keeping awareness at Dantian (the elixir field below the navel), which enables the heart organ and the kidney organ to interact so as to achieve the dynamic balance between Yin and Yang and between Water (kidney) and Fire (heart). Regular and committed Qigong practice first improves the quality of sleep, making one feel more energetic. This in turn would gradually help to relieve such symptoms as dizziness, tinnitus, insomnia, amnesia, palpitation, lumbago, spermatorrhea, and premature ejaculation, all of which result from the failure of the interaction between heart and kidney. Keeping awareness at the elixir field can also reduce heart Fire and nourish the spleen. The spleen and stomach constitute a system that provides the human body with nutrition and energy, and

these organs work together to transform and transport food essence. Therefore, Qigong practice can also improve the appetite and digestion and keep weight in a proper balance. Adjusting the breathing and expelling the old and breathing in the new Qi nourishes the lung Qi, which helps the heart govern and adjust the functions of the internal organs. Adjusting the breath also restrains liver Yang and nourishes kidney Yin by channeling the Qi into the elixir field. The normal ascending and descending of Yin, Yang, Qi, and blood, as well as good Qi circulation, in turn help the transforming and transporting functions of the spleen and the receiving and digesting functions of the stomach.

The liver governs tendons, the kidney governs bones, the spleen governs muscles and limbs, the heart governs blood, and the lung governs the skin and hair. Therefore, adjustments of the body or Daoyin massage movements help disperse liver Qi, ascend spleen Qi, and descend stomach Qi to induce nourishment of skin and hair, strong muscles and bones, and a clear passage for Qi and blood to circulate by means of muscle-tendon movement. Thus it comes as no surprise that many Qigong practitioners look energetic, graceful, strong, and dexterous, and are happy in mood, quick in movement, and improved in appetite.

During Qigong practice, the mind and breath depend on each other, the intent and Qi follow each other, and the body and spirit reflect each other. After long-term persistent practice, the practitioner will reach the point that "where the mind goes, the intent (Yi 意) goes; where the intent goes, the Qi goes; and where the Qi goes, the force (力) goes." This brings about harmonious connections among the five emotions and balanced circulation of Qi and blood. Thus, Qigong plays an important role in preventing disease.

2. Meridians/Collaterals and Qigong

Many Qigong forms were created based on meridian theory. For example, the method of guiding Qi circulation involves using the mind or intent (Yi) to direct Qi through the body following the meridians. Alternatively the mind operates alone, and Qi circulates by itself naturally. Many ancient Qigong forms were conducted in this way.

Meridian theory plays an obvious role in Qigong practice, especially in the performance of the three adjustments (posture, mind, and breath) of the body. In adjusting body posture, the phenomenon, "proper posture is followed by smooth Qi movement" indicates that correct body posture guarantees the smooth passage (through the meridians) and flow of Qi and blood. Patting and massaging also may be carried out on one or several acupoints along the meridians. Kneading the elixir fields and rubbing Yongquan (涌泉), for instance, are employed in Health Preserving Qigong, and patting and striking

the surface of the body along the route of the meridians helps one to relax and is used in Relaxation Qigong.

Adjusting the mind also may involve the meridians, especially the practice of keeping the mind "on" (意守). The places or areas on which to keep the mind are for the most part meridian acupoints, such as the three Dantian, which are used in the internal elixir art, or the points employed for breathing pauses (Zhixi Dian, 止息点) in relaxation Qigong. This is equally the case in the breath adjustments associated with visualization, in which the breath is focused to clear the meridians so that blood and Qi can circulate. Some types of fetal breathing, including body breathing, elixir-field breathing, skin-hair breathing, and so forth, are also conducted by regulating the opening and closing of certain acupoints along the meridians.

Meridian theory is most often employed in directing Qi to overcome diseases and in external Qi healing (spreading Qi). In the former, lucid Qi is guided along meridians to the diseased area, mainly during inhalation, while turbid Qi is let out of the body through the meridians when exhaling. Meridians, in this case, are the channels for directing Qi to "wash" the diseased area again and again. In external Qi healing, Qi is often emitted during exhalation. It is directed through the three Yin meridians along the arm to acupoint Laogong (劳宫) or other acupoints on the palm where it is then emitted. Some breathing styles in fetal breathing, such as body breathing, elixir breathing, and skin/pores breathing, actually consist of breathing through the controlled opening and closing of acupoints.

However, the view of meridians in Qigong practice is not the same as those described in most medical books. As Li Shizhen wrote in his *Study on the Eight Extra Meridians* (奇经八脉考),[8] quoting *Classic of the Eight Channels* or *Bamai Jing* (八脉经) by Zhang Ziyang (张紫阳): "the meridians explained in *Classic of the Eight Channels* or *Bamai Jing* (八脉经) by Ziyang (张紫阳) differ from those stated by medical physicians." They diverge in four ways by comparison:

1. They differ in the extent of the acupoints. Acupoints in Qigong are larger in scope with bigger corresponding regions. The acupoints used in acupuncture and moxibustion confined as points have a narrower scope.

2. They differ in the direction of Qi movement in the conception and governor vessels. In medical books it is said that conception, governor, and penetrating vessels share one source but diverge into three branches. They all originate in the uterus and move upward along separate routes. However, Qigong experts believe that, although the conception and governor vessels share a common source, the meridian Qi in them moves in opposite directions. In the governor vessel Qi moves from the

bottom upwards, playing the role of "ascending the elixir Yang," while Qi in the conception vessel moves from the top downwards, playing the role of "descending the elixir Yin." Thus a continuous flow guarantees the orderly ascent and descent of Qi and the harmonious balance of Yin and Yang.

3. They differ in connection. The medical books claim that the governor and conception vessels are connected by branches, while in Qigong they are held to be connected by the magpie bridge (*Què Qiáo*, 鹊桥).
4. The meridian pathways felt or experienced during Qigong practice are also somewhat different from those described in medical books.

The eight extra meridians are emphasized more than the 12 regular meridians by practitioners of Qigong cultivation, especially by those who practice the internal elixir art; their documentation of Qigong practice contains detailed explanations of such cultivation. As early as 400 BC, the *Zhuang Zi* (庄子)[9] mentions that using "the governor vessel as a main channel to cultivate enables one to stay in good health, strengthen vital energy, and enjoy a long life." Although the conception and governor vessels were not specified in the *Jade Pendant Inscription of Circulating Qi* (行气玉佩铭),[10] it was very clear that breathing deeply to ascend and descend Qi along those two central meridians was already being used to coordinate Yin and Yang. Li Shizhen particularly favored the academic thought presented in writings on the internal elixir art, and expressed his opinions in his *Study on the Eight Extra Meridians* (奇经八脉考),[8] stating that "the internal scenery and channels can be viewed only by those who reflect inwardly." The important role that the interaction of the conception and governor vessels play, and the importance of merging Yin and Yang, are thoroughly discussed in material on the internal elixir art; and it is the core of all Qigong cultivating and practicing forms. More original discussion on this subject may be found in the *Large Heavenly Circulation, Eight Extra-Vessels and Eight Acupoints in Qigong* or *Qigong Dazhoutian Bamai Baxue Lun* (气功大周天八脉八穴论), written by the so-called "Sloppy Daoist." Of the eight extra vessels described in this book, four correspond to the traditional eight, the conception, governor, penetrating, and belt vessels. The other four are referred to as net, elixir, heavenly, and regulating vessels, each corresponding respectively to one acupoint. The conception, governor, and penetrating vessels follow the route described in traditional eight-extra-channel theory. The belt vessel, however, is divided into four portions, each consisting of three ring belt vessels, and the elixir vessel is split into an internal and an external vessel. The net vessel is like a net, as its name suggests. To cultivate the net vessel, the conception and governor vessels are first unblocked, and then all other meridians and collaterals

in the body should be unblocked one by one so as to connect all the channels together. After cultivating the net vessel, all the meridians will be unblocked except for the Zhong Yuan (中元—the part between head and navel), which may still be blocked. When the original Qi is activated to unblock it, the Large Heavenly Circulation is complete. After that, the ability to emit elixir Qi to treat diseases with the eyes closed and mind still indicates success in the cultivation of the external elixir. As to the cultivation of heavenly and regulating vessels, this is even harder to grasp and therefore will not be discussed here. With regard to the positions of the eight acupoints corresponding to the above-mentioned eight extra channels, the acupoint of the conception vessel is at the heart, that of the governor vessel is in the brain, that of the penetrating vessel is in the perineum, that of the belt vessel is in the navel, that of the net vessel is in the front private part, that of the elixir meridian is in the eyes (left for the male, right for the female), and so on.

The "three vessels and four rings" theory (Sanmai Silun, 三脉四轮) of Tibetan Esoteric Buddhism is somewhat similar to meridian theory. The middle vessel of the former is roughly identical with the conception vessel of the latter, and the ring is similar to the elixir field.

III. The Theory of Essence-Qi-Spirit

A. Essence-Qi-Spirit as a Concept

Essence (Jing) refers to all refined, subtle, and nutritious substances and is the material basis that constitutes the human body. In *Plain Questions—Sincere Remarks on the Synopsis of the Golden Chamber* or *Suwen—Jingui Zhenyan Lun* (素问 • 金匮真言论)[7] it is said: "Essence is the base or source of the body." *Spiritual Pivot—Meridians* or *Lingshu—Jingmai* (灵枢 • 经脉)[7] says: "The essence is a prerequisite to a person. Once essence comes into existence, brains and marrow will grow. The bones act as a stand for the body, meridians act as passages and channels to nourish the body, muscles and tendons connect bones, and the flesh acts as protection. Hair grows after skin becomes strong." *Plain Questions—On True Man of the Remote Antiquity* or *Suwen—Shang Gu Tian Zhen Lun* (素问 • 上古天真论)[7] says: "Kidney accepts and stores the essence of five-Zang organs and six-Fu bowels." Thus every part of the body contains the element of essence, and all the organs and tissues are based on essence.

Qi is a refined subtle substance, or a functional activity of the organs in the body. As *The Eighth Problem* from *Classic on Medical Problems* or *Nan Jing—Ba Nan* (难经 • 八难)[11] states: "Qi is the root of the human body. If the root dies, all the stalks and leaves will wither up and perish."

Qi is given different names according to its distribution, locations, and corresponding functions. For instance, the Qi inherent in the prenatal state is called original Qi, genuine Qi, or genuine original Qi. Qi obtained from breathing and diet is called acquired or postnatal Qi, or breathed Qi, or Qi from water and grain.

The Yang aspect of Qi is called Yang Qi, while the Yin aspect of Qi is called Yin Qi. Qi that runs on the exterior or body surface is called defensive Qi. Qi that moves within the vessels is called nutritive Qi. Qi stored in the heart organ is called heart Qi; in the lung organ, lung Qi; in the liver, liver Qi; in the spleen, spleen Qi; and in the kidney, kidney Qi. In the upper warmer (energizer, 焦) it is pectoral Qi; in the middle warmer (energizer), middle Qi; and in the lower warmer (energizer), original Yin Qi and original Yang Qi. These all stem from the original Qi stored in the lower elixir field. As Xu Lingtai (徐灵胎) says in *Treatise on the Source of Medicine* or *Yixue Yuanliu Lun* (医学源流论):[12]

> The five Zang organs have their own genuine essences that are manifestations of the original Qi. By Daoists their origin is called elixir-field, which is equivalent to the Vitality Gate of the *Classic on Medical Problems*, or the "xiaoxin" (小心) beside the seven vertebras of *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic*. It is where Yin and Yang sprouted and breathed Qi is rooted. The original Qi is not Fire but can warm up the whole body; it is not Water but can moisten the five Zang organs. It is where the power of the human metabolism lies. Should the original Qi prevail, life will not perish.

Spirit (Shen) is the governor of life activities. Though it is intangible, spirit represents the active nature of human life activities. It is the instinctive regulating and controlling function, inherent in human life, for thinking and spiritual activities, as well as the instinctive regulating and controlling functions. The *Spiritual Pivot* says: "The original substance of life is called essence; the combined Yin-Yang essence is called spirit (Shen)." The material basis for the spirit is the interaction of the essence Qi, and all activities of the spirit rely on postnatal nourishment.

The essence, Qi, and spirit, "the three treasures" of traditional Qigong, are actually one in the prenatal stage and are all transformed from original Qi. Thus the *Balanced Instructions on Spirit and Life* or *Xing Ming Gui Zhi* (性命圭旨)[13] says: "Although the fundamental medicine can be divided into essence, Qi and spirit, the three share a common source… Showing the trait of circulating, it is called Qi; of cohesion, it is called essence; of magical function, it is called spirit." Having the same origin, they can be transformed into and facilitate each other. As Zhang Jingyue points out in Volume II from *Classic of Categories* or *Lei Jing—Juan 2* (类经 • 卷二),[14] "The foundation of human life is essence and Qi.

Essence generates Qi and Qi in turn generates essence. When Qi is adequate and essence ample, the spirit flourishes. But when Qi dissipates and essence decreases, the spirit will deteriorate."

B. Essence-Qi-Spirit and Qigong

In the Daoist school of Health Preserving Qigong, essence, Qi, and spirit are taken as the original life drive and the material basis of life, hence the terms three-yuan (三元, a collective name for the locations of the three elixir fields), three-cai (三才, a collective name for heaven, earth, and human), and three-bao (三宝, three treasures, a collective name for essence, Qi, and spirit). As Dong Dening (董德宁) wrote in *Annotations on Awakening to the Essence* or *Wuzhen Pian Zhengyi* (悟真篇正义),[15] "Three-yuan (三元) is equivalent to the three-cai (三才), and refers to the three lights in heaven: the sun, the moon and the stars; the three elements on earth: Water, Fire and Earth; and the three aspects of the human body: essence, Qi and spirit." *Mind-Seal Scripture of the Jade Sovereign* or *Yuhuang Xinyin Jing* (玉皇心印经),[16] an ancient book on Qigong, mentions that "the upmost three 'medicines' are essence, Qi and spirit." In Volume XXVIII of the *Classic of Categories* or *Lei Jing—Juan Ershiba* (类经 • 卷二十八),[15] Zhang Jingyue (张景岳) also points out: "Thousands of words in my books on cultivation have come to nothing but the three words: essence, Qi and spirit." Indeed, traditional Qigong practice fundamentally targets the cultivation of the three treasures for keeping fit and obtaining longevity by regulating, nourishing, resuming, and replenishing essence, Qi, and spirit.

Approaches to Nourishing Life without Medicines or *Wu Yao Yuan Quan* (勿药元诠)[17] says it well: "It is from nonexistence to existence by storing up spirit that we produce Qi and store up Qi to produce essence. It is from existence to nonexistence that we refine essence and convert it into Qi, refining Qi to nourish the spirit, and refining the spirit to return to nothingness." That is how the ancient people understood human life. The spirit (Shen) is occult, and as the mental activity of life it directs functional activities so as to absorb external nourishment to duplicate itself, proceeding from nonexistence to existence. Conversely, consuming food and energy and transforming them into mental and functional activities proceeds from existence to nonexistence.

Qigong cultivation is after all about cultivating essence, Qi, and spirit, and maintaining these three treasures. *Effective Approaches to a Long Life* or *Shoushi Qingpian* (寿世青篇)[18] states: "Refine the essence and convert it into Qi, and refine the spirit to return to nothingness. But where to start? The first stage always concerns the mind." These words show that the key to Qigong practice is adjusting the mind so that it can govern the process of generating and transforming essence, Qi, and spirit, as well as maintain the proper metabolic

cycle. Thus, "accumulating essence to nourish and complete spirit (积精全神)," essence and spirit can be stored and the body and spirit can be kept steady in the unity of opposites over a long period of time to ensure good health and longevity.

More specifically, purifying the mind and diminishing the desires contribute to keeping the mind tranquil and avoiding over-consuming the spirit or Shen. Keeping the right thoughts and clearing out unnecessary thinking so that the spirit is bright and unconfused means that all activities of the organism are likely to be in conformity with the principle of health-preservation, which is the law of nature. As *Spiritual Pivot—Central Zang* or *Lingshu—Benchang* (灵枢·本藏)[7] puts it, "A person's will power enables him to control his mind, constrain his ethereal soul (hun, 魂) and corporeal soul (po, 魄), adapt himself to the environment, and moderate his mood."

In the process of making the three adjustments while practicing Qigong, when one focuses on the lower elixir field, heart Fire can descend to warm kidney Water so that the practitioner can avoid the "frenetic stirring of ministerial Fire" and can maintain Yin essence. And as Fire generates spleen earth, the acquired essence is replenished and the inborn essence nourished.

Quietly adjusting the breathing can stop the consumption of genuine Qi, and blowing out the old and breathing in the new helps replenish the pectoral Qi. When Qi penetrates the elixir field, the original Qi returns to its source, and food Qi is sufficient to maintain the body. With adequate Qi, ample essence, and thriving spirit, those suffering from diseases will be restored to health naturally. To prevent illness is to prolong life.

2. Theories of Other Qigong Schools

During their long history of development, the theories of various Qigong schools have intermingled and facilitated each other; each has different aspects, but they all share some aspects in common. The Qigong theories of Daoism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and the martial arts have exerted considerable influence on Medical Qigong, and their influential theories and points on Medical Qigong are briefly introduced in this section.

I. Daoist Qigong Theory

The purpose of the cultivation and practice of philosophical Daoism (including the religious Daoism that emerged later) is different from the practice of Medical Qigong, which is to keep fit, to prevent illness, and to nourish health by refining

and nourishing essence, Qi, and spirit in their postnatal shape and base. This cultivation follows the natural path of human life and was called the biological regimen. The Daoist practitioners, however, aimed at seeking the innate Dao by reversing the natural postnatal trace back to the prenatal original being. They believed that, in so doing, they would become immortals or perfected men who would free themselves from all encumbrances by letting things take their own course. The so-called Great Dao of nothingness does not mean vacuum. Rather it stands for the origin of the universe, which has no postnatal shape or attachment but was filled with vitality.

Daoist Qigong has split into many branches in the history of its evolution and development, including the Tuina and Gulping Qi School (or Branch), Daoyin Life Nourishing School, Mental-Visualizing and Nourishing the Spirit School, and the Internal Elixir Cultivation School. Each school possessed its respective theories. The following is a discussion of the theories of the two major schools of the Daoism tradition.

A. The Daoist Theory of the Internal Elixir (内丹)

The art of internal elixir was the most important practice of later Daoist Qigong cultivation and enjoyed great popularity and wide historical influence. Some of its rudimental Qigong forms are still in use today. As a form of interior practice, internal elixir Qigong stresses turning the intention or awareness inward to induce interdependence between Yi (intent or mind) and Qi, and making the internal Qi circulate along the conception, governor, and other meridians. By cultivating essence, Qi, and spirit internally, it aims at obtaining the same effects as the taking of "immortality pills" in the external elixir art. Therefore it was called internal elixir art, internal elixir Qigong, or elixir tripod art. As it is characterized by the circulation of internal Qi within the conception, governor, and other meridians' pathways, internal elixir Qigong is also referred to as Heavenly Circulation Qigong.

The interior practices performed in traditional internal elixir art was divided into four stages: refining essence and converting it into Qi, refining Qi to nourish the spirit, refining the spirit to return to nothingness, and refining nothingness to integrate into Dao. The stage of refining essence to convert it into Qi is also termed Small Heavenly Circulation. The following is an introduction to the basic theories and preliminary methods of the internal elixir art.

1. *Three Essentials of the Internal Elixir Art—Stove-Ding,*[i] *Medication, and the Fire Heating Control (Huo Hou, 火候)*

Stove-Ding (Furnace)

The term "stove-ding" was borrowed from the external elixir art to describe different body parts of the practitioner in the internal elixir art.

The characters Qian and Kun (乾坤) from *The Book of Changes* or *Zhouyi* (周易) are used respectively to represent furnace and stove, namely the two elixir fields. Qian stands for the head on the top and is therefore the Ding; Kun stands for the abdomen on the bottom and is the stove.

The elixir field has three parts: upper, middle, and lower. The Ding furnace is, in general, considered to be the upper elixir field that lies in the *Niwan* palace between the eyebrows. The middle elixir field lies in the purple-red palace between the breasts, and the stove is thought to be the lower elixir field located at the navel or below it in an area of about four square cun (寸, a unit of length of approximately 1.2 inches).

The internal elixir form involves refining essence and converting it into Qi at the lower elixir field, refining Qi to nourish the spirit at the middle elixir field, and refining the spirit to return to nothingness at the upper elixir field. There are also the theories saying that spirit-cultivating Qigong commences in the upper elixir field, while body-preserving Qigong may commence in the lower elixir field. Equally, one may start to practice at the front elixir field, the navel, or start the form from the back elixir field, the gate of vitality.

Medication

The term medication is also borrowed from the external elixir art. Essence, Qi, and spirit are regarded as medical materials and objects for practice in the internal elixir art. Other terms frequently used to stand for medication are kan (Water) and li (Fire), lead and mercury, dragon and tiger, golden crow (the sun) and jade rabbit (the moon), baby boy and little girl, and so forth, in which the first term represents spirit and the second, essence and Qi.

In terms of refining essence, Qi, and spirit, traditional internal elixir art stresses the importance of cultivating the prenatal original essence, Qi, and spirit, but avoiding the postnatal essence of semen, breathed Qi, and the thinking mind. However, a dividing line can hardly be drawn between the original and postnatal elements, as they are always interacting with each other. When postnatal essence, Qi, and spirit are vigorous, they benefit the original, and when the originals are strong, the individual is ready to cultivate internal elixir.

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i Ding (鼎) is an ancient Chinese furnace with three or four legs. It was used to burn fire or refine elixir.

Fire Heating Control (Huo Hou, 火候)

Fire (Huo) stands for the coordination of the intention of spirit and breathing during practice. It is the motive power or driving force of cultivation. Heating control (Hou) stands for the timing, duration, and sequence of cultivation, including the exact steps and control over the circulation of internal Qi.

It is hard to find a common solution for problems that may arise, as these differ from individual to individual. In view of this situation, the ancient masters always emphasized the significance of extempore instructions at "the stove." In the matter of heating control, the temperature and duration of Fire, much attention should be paid to the right timing. For example, the time to start the Fire is Zi Shi (around midnight, from 11 pm to 1 am, 子时), the winter solstice, or "the ascending of single Yang," referring to the time that Yang Qi ascends. But for the ancient masters, Zi Shi or Yang Qi ascension was determined by the internal vision and feelings of the practitioner, not by solar or other periodical time.

In regulating the heating control of Fire, one should note the proper application of fierce Fire (武火) and mild Fire (文火). Fierce Fire, also known as "Yang breathing," is the coordination of strong breathing with focused intention (mind) to promote the swift ascent of internal Qi through narrow channels. Mild Fire, or "Yin breathing," is the coordination of gentle breathing with mild intention to slowly ascend and descend internal Qi.

Between Yang breathing and Yin breathing is a stage called "bathing," which is conducted at the periods Mou (卯) and You (酉). Mou occurs between 5 and 7 am and You is the period between 5 and 7 pm, during which time the Fire is stable without being either stronger or milder. Again, these time periods during practice are flexible and determined by the practitioner's internal vision, feeling, and experiences.

2. Forms and Procedures of the Internal Elixir Art

Traditional internal elixir art includes three stages of cultivation. Small Heavenly Circulation refines essence and converts it into Qi (or a preparatory stage may precede this stage). Grand Heavenly Circulation refines Qi to nourish the spirit, and the final stage refines the spirit and returns it to nothingness. Small Heavenly Circulation is also known as "refining essence and converting it into Qi," "Kan and Li intercourse," or "Noon and Midnight Circulation" (Zi Wu Zhoutian, 子午周天). The entire process of cultivation can be divided into five steps: training the self, and mixing, producing, gathering, and refining the medications. These processes can be roughly presented as follows.

To train the self, one should adjust the body, exclude stray thoughts, gradually tranquilize the mind, and focus the attention internally. Second, one

concentrates on the central point of Qi, the lower elixir field, and adjusts the breathing to slow, deep, and long breaths linking the postnatal breath to the prenatal Qi at this point. This is "mixing the medications." Since the spirit returns to the interior, the Qi will follow suit. When the scattered and exhausted original essence and Qi have gathered together bit by bit and become dense at the Qi-point, the third step, producing medications, arrives: one feels the Qi movement in a trance in extreme tranquility. The moment the spirit perceives Qi movement is the moment the essence starts to transform into Qi or into secondary medications; in other words, the single Yang rises. The instructions "contract, lift, hold back, and breathe in" should be applied in a timely fashion. At this time the fourth step, gathering medications, starts; it involves moving the Metal by the force of the Fire and intentionally guiding it through the tailbone (Weilu, 尾闾). In the fifth step, continue to refine Qi (the Metal) with fierce Fire. The essence Qi, led by the mind, goes upwards from the tailbone (Weilu, 尾闾), along the spine and the Jiaji (夹脊), passes the Yuzhen (玉枕), and reaches the dust pill (Niwan), the upper elixir. Then the essence Qi descends downwards in warm and gentle Fire from Niwan through the middle elixir field, or the purple-red palace, to return to the Qi point, the lower elixir field. This is the process of refining the medicines. This is the entire process of Small Heavenly Circulation, which is one cycle of circulating Qi through the governor and conception vessels within one inhalation and one exhalation. Ancient people believed that 100–300 breaths could be taken at one practice. People nowadays usually practice for about an hour at a time.

The stage of Small Heavenly Circulation is also known as "One Hundred Days to Build up the Foundation," which is the foundation for the entire internal elixir art. Actually practicing the form of Small Heavenly Circulation is already building up the foundation for all the other styles of Qigong.

The internal elixir art should be practiced under the guidance of an experienced master. Neither self-practice nor learning from a book is permitted. Practitioners must follow the principle of gradual improvement but avoid the blind pursuit of quick results that might end in repeated external, spontaneous movements and Qigong deviation.

B. The Book of Changes and Theory of Daoist Inner Cultivation

The Book of Changes or *Yijing* (易经), also known as *Zhou Yi*, shows the philosophy of change, movement, and evolution patterns of all things on the Earth through the interpretation of 64 hexagrams comprised of eight basic trigrams formed from solid and broken lines. Ranked as number one of the 13 classics, it is not only a major Confucian classic but also one of the important bases for the theory of Daoist internal cultivation. Concerning the implication of "Yi"

(change) in the *Lexicon of Chinese Characters* or *Shuowen* (说文),[19] Xu Shen (许慎) annotates: "The sun and the moon are Yi while Yin and Yang are Xiang (the changes of the sun and the moon signify the changes of Yin and Yang)." The words "Yin" and "Yang" are not mentioned in *The Book of Changes*, but the symbols "—" and "- -" from the Eight Trigrams clearly imply Yin and Yang, and their interchangeability.

1. The Eight Trigrams and Their Origin

There are several versions of the origin of the Eight Trigrams. For example, some maintain that it derives from Eight-Rope (Basuo, 八索) divination, one of the sorceries practiced in primitive religion, or from divination with alpine yarrow sticks or by tying knots. *The Great Treatise II* from *The Book of Changes* or *Zhou Yi—Xi Ci Xia* (周易・系辞下)[20] records:

> In ancient times Fu-xi ruled all the land under heaven. Looking up, he contemplated the brilliant forms exhibited in the sky, and looking down he surveyed the patterns shown on the earth. He contemplated the ornamental appearances of birds and beasts and the different types of soil. Discovering his self and probing into things in general, he devised the Eight Trigrams.

Records of the Historian—Annals of Zhou or *Shi Ji—Zhou Benji* (史记・周本纪)[21] states that "Since Fu-xi devised the Eight Trigrams and King Wen of the Zhou dynasty deduced the 384 lines, the world has become well-governed."

From the multitude of works on *The Book of Changes* and from ancient to modern times the study of Yi (change) developed; it is divided into two main branches: Xiang-Shu (象数, image and number) and Yi-Li (易理, philosophy and logic). The study of Yi is also an important part of the study of Confucian classics in history.

2. Fu-xi's Early Arrangement and King Wen's Later Arrangement

According to the interpretation in *Remarks on the Trigrams* or *Shuogua* (说卦), the Eight Trigrams were first arranged by Fu-xi and later by King Wen. In the former arrangement, Qian (the Creative, 乾) lies in the south, Kun (the Receptive, Resting in Firmness) lies in the north, Li (the Clinging, Brightness) in the east, and Kan (the Perilous Pit) in the west. In the latter arrangement, Li (the Clinging) lies in the south, Kan (the Perilous Pit) the north, Zhen (Thunder, Exciting Power) the east, and Dui (Joy, Pleasure) the west.

Fu-xi's arrangement was termed the early arrangement because it explained the prenatal (which preceded heaven), illustrated the things arranged by the prenatal, and presented the law of the unity between a pair of opposites,

Yin-Yang. "Qian is the first, Dui the second, Li the third, Zhen the fourth, Xun (Gentle Penetration) the fifth, Kan the sixth, Gen (Mountain, Arresting Movement) the seventh, and Kun the eighth" (*True Meaning of the Book of Changes* or *Zhouyi Benyi*, 周易本义).[22] This is a sequential transformation and is in agreement with the saying, "Taiji produced the two elementary forms, the two elementary forms produced the four emblematic symbols, and the four emblematic symbols produced the Eight Trigrams." The early arrangement of Fu-xi demonstrates that Yin is opposite to Yang and indicates the principle of balance and interaction between Yin and Yang in the preceding heavenly state. The Eight Trigrams of Fu-xi are arranged in an S, curving in the opposite directions, showing that the law of growth and change concerning everything on Earth is implied in the balanced state of the preceding heaven.

The later arrangement, based on the order devised by King Wen, was named "later" because it revealed knowledge of that which came after heaven (or the postnatal) and illustrated its popular applications. The later arrangement of King Wen describes the principles governing the changes in all things that have prevailed after heaven (in the postnatal world). The kinship terms Father, Mother, Son, and Daughter were applied to the Eight Trigrams and were figures of speech implying that Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, were the parents of all things on Earth. Yin and Yang could engender everything when they were in harmony, and the generation and transformations of all things on Earth proceeded from the intangible to the tangible, with their shapes appearing outside and Qi moving inside.

3. The Yi Trigrams

A multitude of Yi trigrams have appeared since the Song dynasty: the River Map (He Tu, 河图), Luo Chart (Luo Shu, 洛书), Prenatal trigrams, and the Taiji trigram, just to name a few. It was said that a Daoist priest named Chen Tuan (陈抟) in the Mountain Hua passed the trigrams on to Zhou Dunyi (周敦颐) in the Song dynasty. Zhou made some deductions and handed them down to his descendents. These trigrams exerted great influence on the development of Chinese culture.

There are three speculations regarding the origin of the Yi trigrams of Chen Tuan: (a) he devised the trigrams himself; (b) the trigrams were passed on to him by someone else; (c) he came into possession of trigrams collected by people in the Yin and Zhou dynasties.

The River Map and Luo Chart are generally attributed to Fu-xi, who lived 5000 years ago. *The Great Treatise* from *The Book of Changes* or *Zhou Yi—Xi Ci Zhuan* (周易 • 系辞传)[20] says: "The River gave forth the map, and the Luo the

chart, of which the sages took advantage." This statement is interpreted to mean that the sage Fu-xi devised the Eight Trigrams according to the River Map and the Luo Chart. It is based on the assumption that later scholars believed the River Map and the Luo Chart were the origin of the concept of the Five Elements. These Yi trigrams presented the essence of the Yi principle in the ancient culture, were taught only behind closed doors by Daoists, and revealed the secret of the changes and transformations of Heaven and Earth and of Daoist cultivation and refinement.

The Yi trigrams greatly influenced the development of Health Preserving Qigong. The early trigrams in particular contain the secrets of Daoist cultivation of practices that reverse the existing state of affairs to return to the prenatal origin. The theories contained in the trigrams were inherited by many ensuing life-nurturing schools, especially the Daoist and the internal elixir art schools. In addition, the trigrams affected the development of rationalistic Confucian philosophical thought in the Song dynasty.

4. The "Yi" (Change) Philosophy and Qigong Practice

Traditional Daoist Qigong theory was greatly influenced by *The Book of Changes*, which was especially essential to the traditional internal elixir art. A good example of this influence is the *Concordance of the Three According to the Classic of Changes* (周易参同契),[23] considered to be the "king of the internal elixir canon." This book states that Yin and Yang are the root of "elixir," that "Qian and Kun are the portal of all Yi (changes) and the parents of all trigrams," and that Qian, Kun, Kan, and Li are the foundation (体) while the other 60 hexagrams are the functions (用) in use. Qian and Kun stand for heaven and earth, the external conditions of the correspondence between humans and the universe. Kan and Li stand for Water and Fire, the internal conditions of human life and the elements of Qi transformation and elixir refining.

The book *Talisman of the Three Receptacles Based on Zhouyi* also states that the process of Qi transformation between Yin and Yang is "so enormous that nothing could be more immense, yet it is also so delicate that nothing could be smaller… It can be passed down orally, but hardly by books." The model of the Eight Trigrams has been used to describe periodic rhythms of quantitative and qualitative change; for example, the waxing and waning of Yin and Yang, the increase or reduction of the Fire in the process of elixir refining, and so on, all of which manifest the Qi transformation. In the *Talisman*, such visible things as lead and mercury, Water and Fire, crow and rabbit, dragon and tiger, and sun and moon are used figuratively in the hexagrams and trigrams to reveal how

the harmony and stability of human life can be maintained by the "one divides into two and two are integrated into one" of Yin and Yang. Besides, clearing anxiety from the mind, focusing inwardly on nothingness, Daoyin, and blowing out and breathing in, and so forth, are the practical means for regulating Qi transformation.

The so-called "refining self (炼己)" came from the Najia (纳甲) method in *The Book of Changes*. "Self" belongs to the Li hexagram and refers to the mind in humans. It follows that "refining self" implies concentrating the mind and avoiding all stray thoughts, which is not only the basis of the internal elixir art but should also be part of all Qigong practice.

The so-called "Gen Bei (艮背)" also comes from *The Book of Changes*. The Gen hexagram implies resting, and Gen Bei, accordingly, implies resting the mind on the governor vessel and the gate of vitality on the back.

As to "withdraw Kan to replenish Li" and "from the postnatal, return to the innate," these refer to methods from Small Heavenly Circulation Qigong, including refining essence into Qi and returning essence to nourish the brain. Through these practices, interaction between the heart and the kidney, coordination of Water and Fire, harmony of Yin and Yang, and the union of the sun and the moon can be actuated for the purpose of conceiving the golden elixir. This is demonstrated in the trigrams as follows: take the central Yang (the unbroken line) out of the Kan-Water in the north to replenish the central Yin (the open line) of the Li-Fire in the south (in the later Eight Trigrams, Kan-Water composed of one unbroken Yang line between two open Yin lines in the north or on the bottom and Li-Fire composed of one open Yin line between two unbroken Yang lines in the south or on the top); it becomes a new hexagram with Qian (three Yang, or unbroken lines) in the south and Kun (three Yin, or open lines) in the north, as in the early trigrams of Fu-xi. This indicates that the purpose of Qigong cultivation is to "return to the original state" and "return from the postnatal to the innate." The processes of waxing and waning of Yin and Yang, ascending and descending of Qi, the circle of day and night, and the changes of four seasons during Qigong cultivation are so subtle that they could hardly be described in writing. But they were demonstrated symbolically in the trigrams by the ancients.

II. Buddhist Qigong Theory

Buddhist doctrine originated from the Indian Buddha, Sakyamuni, about 2500 years ago, approximately during the era of Laozi and Confucius in China. After Buddhism spread to China during the end of the Eastern Han dynasty, it expanded quickly and permeated nearly every aspect of traditional social life.

Up to the present, it has even surpassed the native religion of China, Daoism, in prosperity and popularity. Buddhists believe that the world we perceive and live in is unreal or imaginary and is by no means the natural disposition of the universe or life. The mission of Buddhist doctrine is to teach human beings to put aside this imaginary life in order to know the real disposition, namely the Buddha nature. The Buddhist believes that this Buddha nature is in-born, not external, and that by following the Buddha's guidance, one can gain insights into it. Buddhist forms of cultivation are designed solely to achieve this goal.

A brief introduction to Buddhist Qigong theory[ii] concerning the four infinite realms and eight degrees of abstraction (Sichan Bading, 四禅八定), Shamatha and Vipasyana (Zhiguan Famen, 止观法门), and Esoteric Buddhism is presented in this section.

A. Four Infinite Realms and Eight Degrees of Abstraction

Four infinite realms and eight degrees of fixed abstraction (Sichan Bading, 四禅八定) is the most representative form of Buddhist Qigong cultivation. The four realms (Zen) and eight abstractions (Dhyana) actually are the four realms and four abstractions; four realms are included in the eight abstractions because realm and abstraction are interchangeable and they have the same concept. It is similar to the expressions "four sides and eight directions" and "extending to four passages and reaching for eight directions."

The four realms refer to the initial, second, third, and fourth realm, or concentrations in the realm of form. The four abstractions are the Dhyana (in which all thought of form is suppressed), liberation from limitless knowledge or perception, contemplation of the state of nothingness, and the state of mind beyond thought or non-thought. Alternatively they are termed the four immaterial or formless heavens, and ecstatic entry into the four states is represented by the four Dhyana heavens. "State of mind beyond thought or non-thought" is an expression of denial. "Beyond thought" means not to think, and "beyond non-thought" is a double negative that denies the idea of not thinking. "Beyond thought or non-thought," therefore, means "neither to think nor not to think," and indicates the state of mind in which there is neither thought nor absence of thought. As thinking has almost ceased, this is also termed "formless heaven" or "empty abstraction."

Four realms and eight abstractions theory is a huge and complex system of cultivation and practice and is one of the foundations of Buddhist theory. Buddhists believe that there exist innumerable, enormous, immeasurable types

ii None of the Buddhist schools called their methods of cultivation or practice "Qigong" (except for Tibetan Esoteric Buddhist cultivation). It was the Qigong scholars who studied and classified Buddhist cultivation methods as one of the Qigong traditions.

of realms, and that the realms before the initial Dhyana include the realm of liberation from desire, the incompletely attained realm, and so forth, as there are many different levels of cultivation.

Buddhist Qigong cultivation puts stress on adjusting the mind, and this adjustment is fully characterized in the four infinite realms and eight abstractions. Three steps are involved in transforming the practitioner's physical and mental state from the everyday to the first Dhyana state. These are, first, entering the realm of liberation from desire; second, entering the not-yet-attained realm; and then, entering initial Dhyana. The realm of desire, where the mind is scattered and disordered, has no place for Dhyana, but its residents may find some serenity by sitting in meditation, which is the primary stage of Dhyana. This serene state is, however, unstable and transient; hence it is called "the realm of liberation from desire." If one continues to practice and remains firm, the Dhyana state gradually becomes deeper until one enters the not-yet-attained realm, where the mind, the body, the bed, and the chair are as if void, sunk into oblivion. After passing this stage, one will gradually experience the "eight senses" or "16 pulsations and senses" (the eight senses are: pain, itching, coldness, warmness, lightness, heaviness, unsmoothness, and smoothness), which mark the beginning of the first Dhyana.

When the 16 pulsations and senses are replaced by a sense of deeply felt inner joy, one has undergone the transformation from the first Dhyana to the second. The passage into the third Dhyana is marked by a rising sense of inner pleasure. Joy and pleasure are distinct according to the theory of four realms and eight abstractions. The former is the result of external factors, for example winning a promotion or getting rich in the mundane world. The latter is a sense of serenity and peace felt internally; it has nothing to do with external gain and loss, or success and failure. Buddhist classics record that inner pleasure is wonderful beyond description, deeply felt by every cell and every pore, surmounting any earthly pleasure in both nature and degree.

The fourth realm refers to the zone or realm of nothingness, the emptiness that is like a bright and clear mirror in which one dwells in a state free from either joy or pleasure, a state of pure serenity. In the realm beyond the four infinite realms that form the Dhyana, where all forms of thought are suppressed and the state of mind is beyond thought or non-thought, are cultivations that are carried out in extreme obscurity and nothingness. The states of the mind are even more delicate and it seems they can only be sensed, and it is not possible for them to be expressed in words.

The theory of four infinite realms and eight abstractions is representative of Buddhist Qigong theory in its systematic and complete philosophy, and its operational methods. A Buddhist classic, *The Path of Purification* or *Qing Jing Dao*

Lun (清净道论),[24] is recommended to students who are interested in further exploring this subject.

B. Shamatha and Vipasyana (Zhi Guan Tradition)

Shamatha and Vipasyana (Zhi Guan, 止观) is a static Qigong cultivation method advocated by the Buddhist Tiantai (or Fahua) Sect established by Master Monk Zhi Yi in the Sui dynasty. "Zhi" is the translation of the Sanskrit word "samatha," meaning meditation (focusing on one realm); and "Guan," vipasyana in Sanskrit, means wisdom (thought, observation, and reflection).

Zeng Zhao of the Eastern Jin dynasty says in the notes of the fifth volume of *Uygu Interrogates Buddhist Scriptures* (*Wei Mo Jie Jing*, 维摩诘经),[25] "When the mind is attached to the predestined affinity, it is 'Zhi,' and when it reflects and reaches deep, it is 'Guan.'" It follows that "Zhi" means whole-heartedly focusing on the interior by keeping the observed object in the mind and eliminating wandering thoughts. Alternatives are meditation and wisdom, inward reflection, and serenity. Based on "Zhi," "Guan" implies concentrating and reflecting on objects in order to obtain wisdom and insights or merits and virtues.

1. Twenty-Five Aids to Meditation

The complete contents of the Shamatha and Vipasyana method can be summarized as the "25 aids to meditation":

1. Having the five conditions of abiding by Buddhist monastic discipline and keeping serene, possessing sufficient food and clothing, living in a secluded abode, ceasing to worry, and being knowledgeable.
2. Dispelling the five desires caused by external stimuli: desire for color (sex?), sound, smell, taste, and touch.
3. Abandoning the five desires produced internally: greed, anger, drowsiness, repentance, and doubt.
4. Adjusting the five harmonies of diet, sleep, body, breath, and mind.
5. Executing the five laws of aspiration, remarkable advance, longing, wisdom, and devotion.

These 25 aids to meditation include preparatory work, forms of cultivation, and daily observances that need attention.

2. Adjusting the Body, the Breath, and the Mind

Adjustments of the body, breath, and mind are of special significance in the 25 aids to meditation and are the three basic elements of Qigong practice that

are carried out together with the processes of Shamatha and Vipasyana. This resembles modern Qigong's theory of integrating the three adjustments into Oneness.

1. Adjusting the body. When practicing Shamatha and Vipasyana, one is expected to adjust the body posture and usually sits in the lotus position. Before and during practice one must position the hands and feet, loosen the belt and any other restrictive clothing, straighten the trunk, hold the head and neck erect, expel turbid Qi through the mouth and breathe in fresh Qi through the nose, keep the mouth and eyes closed, and remain still. Gradually, one will reach the so-called body-adjusted state, in which one is neither tense nor flaccid.
2. Adjusting the breath. In the practice of Shamatha and Vipasyana, one needs to transform the puffing and blowing breath, heavy breath, or obstructed breath into the fine breath that is deep, slow, long, and continuous in exhalation and inhalation. The breathing is as subtle as if it were not there. Three methods for adjusting the breath are suggested as:
    a. Calm the mind, stabilize the mood, and keep the mind peaceful and unruffled; the emphasis is on tranquility.
    b. Relax the stress of the body to avoid any tension in the muscles. The emphasis is on relaxation.
    c. Imagine that Qi enters and exits through every pore of the skin without any difficulty. Thus, eventually achieving a breath-adjusted state in which the breath is no longer thick, heavy, short, or noisy, but is fine, gentle, long, and subtle.
3. Adjusting the mind and mood. The entire process of Shamatha and Vipasyana involves three steps. The first step is entering the "Ding," a composed state-of-mind, by adjusting one's mental activity with techniques such as concentrating the mind on the tip of the nose, the place between the eyes, or the center of the navel, or by contemplating the Qi flowing downwards. When a quiet, meditative state is obtained, where all ups and downs, worries, and problems are settled, and the mind is neither disturbed nor distracted by extraneous thoughts, it is possible to move to the second step. The second step is staying in the "Ding." On the basis of the first step, one makes further adjustments to the body, breath, and mind, resolving any disharmony for the purpose of integrating them into one. The third step is exiting the "Ding." It is performed at the end of practice according to the principle of "adjusting

the body, breath, and mind when exiting the composed state." Switch the stages of the body from quiescence to movement gradually without haste: release the mind, open the mouth to exhale, move the shoulders, the hands, the neck, and the two feet slightly, caress the pores all over the body, rub the two hands, cover the two eyes, and so forth, to finish the process.

3. Zhi Method and Guan Method

Zhi and Guan methods are means of cultivating the mind in the process of adjusting the body, breath, and mind. Zhi indicates stop or ceasing, namely keeping extraneous thoughts from disturbing and distracting the mind at the beginning of practice. Guan means closing the eyes to reflect inwardly, namely reflecting the internal sights, as per well as the mind that reflects these sights, as per the instructions in the *Primary Shamatha and Vipasyana* or *Tongmeng Zhiguan* (童蒙止观), "At the beginning, the practitioner has a whirling and disturbed mind with extraneous thoughts. Zhi should be employed to help one cease random or stray thoughts. If the Zhi method fails, one can apply Guan."

One of the main components of cultivating the mind in Qigong practice is excluding stray thoughts and focusing attention on the practice. Focusing on one realm and reflecting inwardly are the measures frequently adopted by practitioners to achieve this purpose. The following are some methods for the reader's reference.

Zhi Cultivation (or the Method of Focusing on One Realm)

1. In the Zhi method of centering awareness at the predestined affinity, the mind rests at the tip of nose, or at the navel, etc. without distraction, as an ape is locked in. The predestined affinity refers to one object of the multitude of wandering thoughts. Centering on the affinity is to center the mind on one subject to stop it from wandering.
2. In the Zhi method of reining in the mind, check whatever comes to mind and purposely stop it and do not let it spread. When the mind is relatively calm after the Zhi method of centering awareness at the predestined affinity, one can change the method to focus on the source of the wandering thought and stop it quickly. Here, one needs to pay close attention to one's intentional mind activity.
3. In the Zhi method of experiencing the true body inwardly (Ti Zhen Fa, 体真法), one closes the eyes to perceive the interior body, trying to experience the internal body actions in order to exclude stray thoughts. "Ti" means experiencing and feeling, and "Zhen" means reality and

truth. On the basis of the previous two methods, this one is intended to examine the truthfulness of the random thoughts by feeling or analyzing them and finding out where they come from. Once the practitioner discovers that the wandering thoughts come into the mind accidentally and are fabricated and unreal, they will be naturally discarded.

Guan Cultivation (or the Reflection Method)

1. Empty-reflecting method. All forms of things and objects wandering through the mind, either internal or external, are in constant flux and are unreal and unstable. Applying consciousness or intention to reflect this emptiness is the empty-reflecting method.
2. False reflections method. All forms of things and objects wandering through the mind, either internal or external, are devoid of substantial content or matter and are nothing but imaginary. Breaking from obsession with these stray thoughts and reflecting on their falsehood is termed the false reflections method.
3. Neutral reflection method. With all forms of things and objects both internal and external running through the mind, one is not to be obsessed with emptiness in reflecting the empty, or with falsehood in reflecting the false. The neutral reflection method is aimed at obtaining a bright and pure state of unity between emptiness and falsehood.

In brief, reducing a variety of thoughts to a single one is Zhi (focusing on one realm), and creating clarity in wandering is Guan (reflection). The two are in positive interdependence and interaction and can be applied interchangeably and simultaneously.

For more details about focusing on one realm and reflection, the reader can refer to the monographs by Zhiyi, the founder of the Buddhist Tiantai Sect: *Principles of Buddhist Cultivation* or *Xiuxi Zhiguan Zuochan Fayao* (修习止观坐禅法要), otherwise known as *Primary Shamatha and Vipasyana* or *Tongmeng Zhiguan* (童蒙止观); *Minor Shamatha and Vipasyana* or *Xiao Zhiguan* (小止观); *Six Marvelous Doors to Enlightenment* or *Liumiao Famen* (六妙法门), also known as *Flexible Shamatha and Vipasyana* or *Buding Zhiguan* (不定止观); or *The Great Vipasyana* or *Mohe Zhiguan* (摩诃止观) (or *Completion Shamatha and Vipasyana* or *Yuandun Zhiguan*, 圆顿止观). In addition, some forms of practice for treating diseases are also included in *Primary Shamatha and Vipasyana* and *The Great Vipasyana.*

C. Theory of Esoteric Buddhist Cultivation

Esoteric Buddhism, also known as the esoteric religion, is one of the Mahayana sects and is believed to have been founded by Vairocana. Esoteric Buddhism originated in the latter period of the Indian Mahayana. Some scholars think it is a product of the integration of Brahmanism with some Mahayana sects after the seventh century.

Esoteric Buddhism is characterized by highly organized incantations, etiquette, and folk customs. Its classical masterpieces include *Vairocana Sutra* (大日经) and *The Diamond Apex Sutra* or *Jingangding Jing* (金刚顶经). It emphasizes the importance of knowledge handed down by its master and the cultivation of the three esotericas, body, word, and mind, in order to become Buddha immediately.

Spreading to China in the eighth century, Esoteric Buddhism shares common ground with Mahayana in its ultimate goal, though it differs in form. Esoteric Buddhism's theories have distinctive features, and some of its self-cultivating methods have drawn much attention from Qigong practitioners.

The following is a brief introduction to a few essentials of Esoteric Buddhist cultivation.

1. The Vessel Theory of Esoteric Buddhism

The forms for cultivating Esoteric Buddhism lay special emphasis on working with Qi, vessels, and luminous points. Here Qi refers to internal Qi energy, vessels to the system of channels and vessels (meridians), and luminous points to specific positions along the vessels, close to the glandular organs of the modern endocrine system. Most forms for cultivating Esoteric Buddhism can be found in *The Supreme Yoga* or *Wushang Yujia Bu* (无上瑜伽部). Esoteric Buddhism has distinctive theories of internal vessels, such as the "three vessels and four wheels" (Lun, 轮), or "three vessels and six wheels," based on cultivating practice.

Collection of Essential Methods in Mahayana or *Dacheng Yaodao Miji* (大乘要道密集)[26] specifies that the "three vessels" stand for the three major vessels on the left, in the middle, and on the right side of the body. The middle vessel, in particular, is an essential passageway from Huiyin (会阴) to the top of the head. The wheel refers to the crossing point of the three vessels and the crossing points between the three vessels and others. The four wheels refer to the transmission wheel around the navel, the supernatural wheel around the heart, the karmic wheel around the throat, and the pleasure wheel around the top of the head. The six wheels are the wheels on top of the head, in between the eyebrows, around the throat, around the heart, around the navel, and around the perineum. Each wheel links to the three vessels through particular channels.

Different sects have made quite distinct explanations of vessel theory in their classics and, accordingly, apply the vessels differently in practice.

2. Summary of the Manner of Cultivating Esoteric Buddhism

Esoteric Buddhist cultivation involves promoting the three esotericas previously mentioned: the body esoterica (sitting in lotus position and holding mudras), word esoterica (chanting an esoteric mantra), and mind esoterica (focus and reflection). Some basic skills termed esoteric training or building the foundation are required before beginning formal practice of the esotericas. The forms of wind yoga for circulating Qi and adjusting breath, and cultivating Qi in the "precious vase," are often employed for this purpose. Three stages are involved in cultivating Qi in the "precious vase": (1) Focus the mind and adjust the breath. (2) Cultivate the nine-sect wind (Jiujie Feng, 九节风), four ways of breathing (Sixi Fa, 四息法), Ajracchedika-chant, etc. (3) Cultivate the elixir-Fire state (Zhuohuo Ding, 拙火定). Those who succeed in entering this state will emit strong warm Qi and gain four forms of joy (early joy, upper joy, leaving joy, and complete joy). Feeling great joy at whatever they see or hear, they have acquired "no-distinction wisdom" and achieved mudra in the present life.

Esoteric Buddhism also includes the cultivation of formless yoga forms such as mudra (大手印) and all-inclusiveness (大圆满), which are similar to the mental enlightenment of the Zen Buddhism of Mahayana and hence termed "non-attentive yoga."

Nearly every form of yoga in Esoteric Buddhism takes sitting meditation as the main form of practice. But dynamic forms can also be found, such as "supreme yoga." "Supreme yoga" emphasizes physical training as a necessary supplementary aid for strengthening the body, unblocking the vessels, eliminating the turbid, and transforming the essence in the practice of cultivating Qi, vessels, and luminous points. Dynamic movements for physical training include groveling (Dalibai, 大礼拜), the stance of Buddha's warrior attendants (Jingangli, 金刚立), and boxing (拳法). Boxing is similar to body positions in yoga and Daoyin in Daoism. Some of the boxing movements actually belong to dynamic Qigong, but they are taught and handed down from master to students orally and seldom put into written form. Those that have been handed down from the Han dynasty include the "absolutely clear" (一目了然) 37 boxing techniques, six-stove Fire boxing, Naluoba's six methods of refining Qi, and Vajracchedika Haimu boxing. Static (meditative) cultivation is a prerequisite to dynamic form practice in Esoteric Buddhist cultivation. The dynamic forms serve the function of blowing out the old and breathing in the new, eliminating turbid Qi from the chest, and unblocking and harmonizing all vessels of

the body. Furthermore, dynamic practice also builds a strong foundation for advancement in static meditation.

III. Confucian Qigong Theory

Confucian Qigong originated in the Spring–Autumn and Warring States Period. Confucius and his students were its earliest advocates and practitioners. The aim of Confucianism was to cultivate personal strength, harmonize the family, govern the state, and bring peace to the world. As a part of physical cultivation, Qigong practice was considered of great importance. However, when it comes to Qigong theory and practice, Confucianism has not achieved as much as Daoism and Buddhism, since it has contributed fewer treatises on Qigong practice and fewer distinctive Qigong forms. It therefore comes as no surprise that Confucian Qigong theory and its forms have exerted comparatively less influence on the field of Qigong.

Static Qigong, embodying the idea of tending life and cultivating spirit, is the major constituent of Confucian Qigong.

A notable work, *Treatise on Sitting and Forgetting* or *Zhuowang Lun* (坐忘论),[27] by Sima Chengzhen (司马承祯) in the Tang dynasty, lists seven stages of sitting in forgetfulness: first, pietistic conviction; second, disassociating affinity; third, focusing inwardly; fourth, simplifying things; fifth, genuine reflection; sixth, deep concentration; and seventh, obtaining the Dao. He also wrote: "For those who sit in forgetfulness what could not be forgotten? He feels no body inside and knows no universe outside. Integrating into Dao, he forgets all thoughts." The key for sitting in forgetfulness lies in one word, which is "forgetting": relaxing the body and limbs, and forgetting the body externally and the mind internally. The great thoroughfare is also the Great Dao. Therefore, those who succeed in entering the state of sitting in forgetfulness will conform to the Great Dao. According to *Treatise on Sitting and Forgetting*, sitting in forgetfulness can be used to regulate and balance Qi circulation within the meridians, tonify the kidneys, recover the essence and nourish the brain, and reduce physical and mental fatigue. With so many great benefits to the practice of tending life and cultivating human nature, sitting in forgetfulness is assumed to be the foundation of Confucian Qigong cultivation.

Zhu Xi, an educator and philosopher in the Southern Song dynasty, recorded his own experience in the methods of adjusting breathing in his *Maxim on Adjusting Breath* or *Tiaoxi Zhen* (调息箴), found in *Collected Works of Zhu Wengong* or *Zhu Wen Gong Wen Ji* (朱文公文集);[28] he remarked:

> The maxim about adjusting breath shows an approach to nourishing the mind. Those whose minds are full of stray thoughts tend to breathe

> out long but breathe in short, which needs to be corrected. When the breath is deep and slow, the mind can gradually be composed. This is the so-called cultivating the Yi (will or intent) and avoids causing the breathing to become violent. There is white light over the tip of the nose. Focus on it anywhere and any time with deep concentration. In extreme tranquility one breathes out like a fish in a spring pond, while in extreme dynamism one breathes in like insects during hibernation. The experience of breathing and opening and closing of Qi is full of wonder.

Here Zhu Xi's own experience came from "observing the breathing." He believed that this method could be used when one was ill: "It is no good to think too much when one is sick. Put everything aside and contemplate inwardly to nourish the Qi. Sit in the lotus position, heeding the tip of the nose and focusing on the navel and abdomen. When this is done continually, one will experience warmth inside and feel the effects."

Wang Shouren, a Confucian scholar in the Ming dynasty also known as Mr. Ming Yang, considered the original essence, original Qi, and original spirit to be one and the same: "It is Qi when moving, essence when cohering, and spirit when speculating."[29]

Although these personal opinions do not form a theoretical system, they have been regarded as the academic theories of Confucian Qigong.

IV. Martial Arts Qigong Theory

Martial Arts Qigong stresses training the physical aspects of the human body, that is, training the tendons and muscles, bones and skin externally, and cultivating and refining the one breath of Qi (energy) internally. Its main characteristics are vigorous exercises, difficult movements, and the integration of Yi/mind, Qi/energy, and Li/strength. It cultivates the process or skills by which the Yi leads the Qi while the Li/force accompanies the Qi. A few Qigong styles also have special breathing techniques, aimed at improving the ability to exert Fajin/force. The main martial Qigong forms fall into three distinct categories, and the theory of each category places emphasis on different aspects accordingly.

A. Traditional Movement-Set Qigong

There are many movement-sets of Martial Arts Qigong methods. The famous ones include the Eight Pieces of Brocade, the Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic Method, and Shaolin Internal Qigong.

The Eight Pieces of Brocade is attributed to General Yue Fei of the Song dynasty. This Qigong mostly uses the horse-riding stance. Its movements are big and powerful.

The Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic Method employs both static force and vigorous movements. Practitioners learn the balance between hardness and softness. *The Medical Classic Plain Questions Classic* or *Su Wen—Wuzang Shengcheng Pian* (素问 • 五脏生成篇)[7] states: "All tendons belong to the joints." Tendons are the tough and elastic tissues connecting the muscles to the bones and lie outside or inside the muscles. Tendons restrict and protect the locomotive organs. It says in *The Tendon Changing Classic* or *Yijin Jing* (易筋经) that tendons located outside the bones and inside the muscles are the structures or network of the body. They connect the four limbs and the many bones together, and are everywhere in the whole body. Strengthening the tendons and improving the circulation in the vessels is to support the spirit externally. Therefore, the Tendon Changing Classic Method aims to strengthen the tendons and bones and improve blood circulation to make the body strong and healthy.

Shaolin Internal Qigong was created by Dr. Li, a specialist of Tuina (Chinese massage). This method is similar to the Tendon Changing Classic Method. It employs both the horse-riding stance and the bow and arrow stance. It emphasizes three straight positions and four alignments (keep arm, back, and leg straight, with the head, shoulder, hand, and foot in alignment) for the purpose of strengthening the arms and fingers of Tuina therapists.

B. Martial Arts Standing Post Qigong

Many popular Martial Arts Qigong styles nowadays are developed from Standing Post Qigong, including E-Mei 12 Stances, Yi Quan Standing Post Qigong, and Dacheng Boxing. The theories of these forms emphasize building up the foundation by cultivating Jing (essence), Qi (energy), and Shen (spirit) through standing post.

E-Mei 12 Stances is a moving standing post Qigong which is a combination of basic standing post with sets of body movement. It emphasizes roundness, emptiness, and centeredness. The postures should be round, the Yi or the mind is empty, and the Qi is centered and balanced. The importance of this Qigong form is being soft: the whole body should be as soft as a baby; the movements soft as a crawling snake; the touch soft as Water; and the breath soft and long as if it never comes to an end. The Qi should be tight and sink into the Dantian (center of the body, slightly below the navel). Under the principle of softness, every movement with standing post makes the change of Qi within the meridians of the body, with corresponding sensations of soreness, numbness, pain, coldness, or warmness, or with corresponding phenomena of moving or

touching. When practicing the form very well, one knows the Qi movement in the body and can control it by the Yi or mind. Therefore, in the process of transforming from the dynamic to static form, to further achieve success, a solid foundation of static Qigong is required. E-Mei 12 Stances also employs sound breathing techniques, using four sounds, Si, Hei, Xu, and Xi, to regulate the ascending, descending, opening, and closing of Qi.

Yi Quan Standing Post Qigong was created by Grandmaster Wang Xiang Zhai (王芗斋) in modern times. It is a set of forms of boxing with internal Qigong, and is also named Yi Quan Nourishing Life Standing Post. It emphasizes Yi or mind and spirit (both dynamic and static forms are all led by the mind) and its basic training consists of standing post. Practitioners are taught to stand naturally, breathe naturally, relax the body, and calm their minds. This style does not involve either attention to the Dantian and the Small and Grand Heavenly Circles, or the Eight Trigrams and Yin and Yang. At its higher level, practitioners will understand the concept that small motion is better than big motion, no motion is better than small motion, and no motion is really endless motion. Thus, one quiet movement is better than hundreds of movements, and one standing post is better than a hundred practices with movement. Actually, when standing still, the muscles are vigorously moving internally but no movement is showing externally, the "motion of no motion." It aims to improve the practitioner's life force.

C. Internal Martial Arts

Within many famous internal martial arts in China, Taiji Quan (Tai Chi Chuan), Bagua Zhang (Eight Trigrams Palms), Xinyi Quan (Form and Mind Fist), and Wu Dang Neigong Quan (Internal Fist) are the representatives. All internal arts are excellent fighting arts. But they also stress life nurturing and internal cultivation, and they embody the ideas of Yin-Yang, motion-tranquility, hard-soft, and training the body to nourish the mind.

The most popular internal art is Taiji Quan. The movements of Taiji are soft and smooth, slow and continuous, and also circular like the Yin-Yang Taiji figure; therefore it was named Taiji Quan. Taiji Quan combines coordinated hand, eye, body, and leg movement and Daoyin inhalation and exhalation, thus becoming an integrated internal martial art. The practice demands the harmonization of mind, abdominal breath, and body movements, as well as the integration of motion and tranquility. The movements of Taiji are unique arc-shaped spiral movements; basically they require that:

1. the whole body moves as one unit
2. the upper and lower body follow each other

3. the interior and the exterior are in tune
4. the body, eye, and footwork should be coordinated
5. the waist and spine should function as an axis, so that the turning and twisting of the waist and spine lead the spiral movement of the body and the four limbs
6. the mind is calm and the body relaxed for the entire practice; the Qi is guided with Yi/mind, and the movements follow the Qi in order to spread the Qi throughout the whole body smoothly, through the meridians
7. the Qi is returned to its original place—the Dantian.

Taiji Quan has been handed down through many styles (including Chen Style, Yang Style, Wu Style, Wu-hao Style, and Sun Style; these are the five major Taiji styles in China) and each style has its own characteristic theory and methods of practice.

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CHAPTER 3

Modern Scientific Research on Qigong

The purpose of modern scientific research on Qigong is to describe or verify the effects of Qigong, to explore the mechanism of its effects, to form the modern scientific theory of Qigong, and to identify an appropriate research methodology for further study of Qigong by means of scientific approaches (including those of modern medical science) and experimental methods.

This chapter provides an overview of modern Qigong research.

1. Summary of Modern Research on Qigong

Modern scientific research on Qigong started in the 1950s, and thus has a relatively short history and is still in its initial stage of development. As yet there is no significant breakthrough. However, modern scientific research on Qigong is substantial, and the study of ancient Qigong has been recognized by and gained the attention of scientists and scholars alike.

I. Development of Modern Research on Qigong

The content, depth, and scale of modern research on Qigong are intimately related to its dissemination, popularity, vicissitudes, and rejuvenation. Since the 1950s, modern scientific research on Qigong has gone through three periods.

A. From the Mid-1950s to Mid-1960s

This was the initial period of modern research on Qigong. The research on Qigong during this period was conducted mainly in the area of medicine, and it focused on observing the clinical therapeutic effects of Qigong by Qigong practitioners and on measuring specific physiological processes. Meanwhile, an upsurge of interest in Qigong appeared, which was known as the first Qigong high-tide in China.

In the 1950s, Qigong became more widely recognized and taught as one of the therapies of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Qigong aroused the interest of the public because of its wonderful therapeutic effects in alleviating symptoms of chronic diseases without the use of medication. Researchers started observational research on the clinical effects of Qigong therapy using modern scientific techniques and approaches.

Research gradually grew from observation of a single case or a few cases to studies of thousands of cases that achieved statistical significance. Effects of Qigong treatment for more than 20 different diseases were observed, including: respiratory system conditions such as obstructive pulmonary emphysema and bronchial asthma; circulatory system conditions such as hypertension, coronary heart disease, angina pectoris, arrhythmia, tachycardia, and rheumatic valve disease; digestive system diseases such as gastric and duodenal ulcers, gastric mucosa prolapse, chronic hepatic diseases, irritable bowel syndrome, and chronic constipation; nervous system conditions such as neurasthenia and neurosis; endocrine system diseases such as diabetes mellitus; gynecological conditions such as toxemia of pregnancy, chronic pelvic inflammation, and uterine prolapse; and ophthalmology conditions such as primary glaucoma, amongst others.

Experimental research was done in laboratory settings. Objective indexes of physiology and biochemistry were measured carefully and concurrently with the observation of clinical effects. It included respiratory physiology of Qigong, such as research on the model of Qigong respiratory movement, the mechanism of Qigong respiration power, and the relationship between the functions of Qigong respiration and the autonomic nervous system, breath adjustment of Qigong and the respiratory air exchange of Qigong, and the relationship between oxygen metabolism and pulmonary function. The studies also include research on the indexes of circulatory physiology such as arterial blood pressure, changes in heart rate, skin temperature, permeability of blood vessels, blood components, and heart size (through echocardiogram, 心影); research on digestive physiological functions such as gastro-intestinal enteric peristaltic wave, gastric secretion and saliva secretion, and hepatic functions; research on

electric neurophysiology such as electroencephalogram (EEG), electromyogram (EMG), and the skin; research on endocrinology and metabolism such as 17-ketosteroids and blood glucose level; as well as the study of visual physiology such as visual threshold and level of ophthalmic pressure.[1, 2]

B. From the Late 1970s to Late 1990s

During this period, more extensive research was done on Qigong, leading to the second wave of interest in Qigong. With the development of different Qigong methods and forms, Qigong practice was no longer limited to the static meditation form and solo practice. The integrated dynamic and meditative Qigong practiced by groups of people became popular.

In the 1980s, increased prevalence of discussing the existence and application of the external Qi of Qigong diversified Medical Qigong delivery, and brought about the combination of Qigong therapy with psychotherapy, Tuina, acupoint pressure, and acupuncture-moxibustion. As a result, the scope of clinical applications and indications for Qigong therapy was greatly expanded. Practicing Qigong for the purpose of promoting intelligence and developing the extraordinary potential of human beings, and its application in entertainment, sports, space aeronautics, and even in military science, extended the scope of its application beyond medical science.

Progress in the application of technology for medical diagnosis, and advances in the development of scientific theory and philosophy, contributed to an expansion of Qigong study, and both an extension of research and enrichment of its content.

The experimental research of this period repeated some of the earlier research and took it further. Qigong study based on indexes of the electrical activity of the brain, for example, employed the EEG frequency power spectrum, dimension analysis, chaos theory, brain evoked potentials, brain electrical activity mapping, fMRI, etc. The study of static Qigong grew from observation of a single variable to comprehensive analysis of multiple variables. In studying the effect of Qigong on the functions of the cardiovascular system, multiple methods were adopted to demonstrate the functions of the heart and blood vessels: impedance blood flow measurement, ultrasound, and direct optical microcirculation endoscopy in combination with changes in hemodynamic measurements. Comprehensive analysis was done on documented hemodynamic changes, as well as measured changes of cholesterol and other lipoproteins. The skin temperature was measured by means of remote sensing techniques such as infrared-thermo-gram.

Furthermore, the level of observation of the Qigong effects evolved from holistic body observation to measuring changes at the cellular and molecular level. Some studies documented the effect of Qigong on deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA).

A large amount of research included measuring the effects of Qigong not only on the practitioner, but also on the external subjects or patients. This secondary effect is labeled "external Qi" (or Wei Qi). The study of the effects or correlates of the external Qi of Qigong covered research works on both the extracorporeal effects and the nature of external Qi itself. The former is represented by research on the effects of external Qi on the cells and other humans. The latter is researched by varied tests attempting to quantify and qualify the nature or characteristics of external Qi, including the far-infrared field of the external Qi, bio-magnetic field of the external Qi, static electric field of the external Qi, as well as microwave, laser, and radial field of the external Qi.

The recent study of the "external Qi" of Qigong not only extended the scope of therapeutic Qigong methods or forms, but made it possible to conduct Qigong-related research on animals. Extensive experimental research on animals became one of the characteristics of Qigong research in this time period and also aroused people's interests in the nature of external Qi and posed many questions: Is Qi substantial or functional? Is it particle flow, energy, or information? How it is actually generated, developed, and transmitted? What are its medium, movement pattern, and true effects?

Academic contention among different schools of thought strived to understand this phenomenon called "Qi." In general, most researchers agreed that "external Qi" may be a life phenomenon with multiple characteristics of matter (like particle flow or bio-photon), energy (like heat from far infrared),[i] and information.[1, 3]

Since the 1980s, the intensive research on Qigong has gradually given rise to an extensive exploration of its modern theories. In an attempt to explain ancient Qigong, researchers constructed a modern framework of Qigong theory with reference to the latest scientific theories of the modern age.

Thermodynamics, cybernetics, coordination theory, field of human body (biofield theory), multidimensional space, separate-dimension, incremental parameters, etc. were applied to explain the mechanism of Qigong phenomena in health preservation and treating diseases. However, these expositions or theories are merely hypotheses and speculations rather than matured scientific

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i Qi has been described as a vital energy or bio-energy without a known material base or measuring unit. Modern physics proposes that 75–80 percent of the world exists in the form of energy. Therefore, we should not simply use known energy forms or materials to explain the unknown energy form(s).

theory, as they have been made mostly through analogy and association without empirical data support.[4]

In spite of various deficiencies and the absence of apparent breakthroughs, the development in Qigong research of this period is, nevertheless, significant and cannot be overlooked. It is an indispensable phase in the exploration of an unknown field, which can give inspiration to researchers in the future.

C. From 2000 to Now

The beginning of the 21st century witnessed the start of the standardized management of Qigong in China. The Management Center on Health Qigong in the State Administration of Sport Affairs was set up in 2001, which marked a turning point in its nongovernmental status. Based on extensive investigation, the center convened experts and scholars to compile four forms of Health Qigong after widely accepting the suggestions from experts of Qigong study. The four forms of Health Qigong are: Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic, Five-Animal Play of Health Qigong, Eight Pieces of Brocade of Health Qigong, and the Six Syllable Formula of Health Qigong. Scientific tests of the effects of the four Health Qigong forms had been conducted using modern scientific methods, and the results were encouraging. In 2003, the Administration of Sport Affairs of China issued a formal document, in which Health Qigong was placed as the 97th official sport. The compilation of new Qigong forms and authorization for Qigong as a sport by official government organization were unprecedented in the thousands of years of Qigong history. The State Administration of Sport Affairs in China continued to invite public proposals on new research projects for the purpose of looking deeper into the mechanism of Health Qigong and traditional Qigong theories. Health Qigong workshops have been set up across China. In some areas, local Health Preserving Qigong forms were promoted to meet demand both in China and internationally. State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) established the Examination Commission on Medical Qigong in 2004, and plans to hold certificate exams in due course to implement the standardized management of Medical Qigong practitioners.

Research projects started at the end of the 20th century have continued: functional MRI studies of brain activity while doing Qigong, clinical research on using the Daoyin form of Qigong to correct deviations made in Qigong practice, and study of the mechanism and clinical efficacy of Qigong on bronchial asthma. Standardized management of Qigong and increasing investment in its study will undoubtedly bring about a period of steady development in modern research on Qigong. We have reason to believe that modern science will one day solve the mystery of Qigong, and experimental Qigong research is entering the field of modern science, where it certainly belongs.

II. Trends and Controversy in Qigong Research

The research trends in Qigong study are represented by two main directions. First, research on the effects of Qigong, namely examining and measuring the change in subjective and objective variables caused by Qigong practice or Qigong therapy. In terms of Medical Qigong, it refers to the evaluation of its clinical therapeutic effect with objective indexes obtained through the approaches of medical science. It covers the study of external Qi and experimental research on Qigong conducted in other fields, such as the effects of Qigong on physiology, psychology, physics, and biochemistry measured through the approaches of experimental research. Second, research on the modern theory of Qigong involves constructing a framework of modern Qigong theory with research on classic theory as well as modern fundamental research mentioned previously. Or in other words, it endeavors to offer an explanation for ancient Qigong using the scientific theories of modern times.

A. Research on the Effects of Qigong

Research, based on modern science and technology, attempts to explore the various effects of Qigong with the aid of modern scientific approaches and methodology. Using strict and systematic experiments, experimental Qigong is aimed at obtaining higher credibility on multiple levels and from different perspectives. Judging from the research work conducted over the past decades, the following areas of research need additional attention or improvement.

1. Taking a Strict Attitude

It takes courage to venture into the field of Qigong study, which may possibly go beyond the boundaries currently defined by modern science. This influence of Qigong research on expanding the vision of modern science should be recognized.

2. Principles and Restrictions on Qigong Research

On the one hand, the design and performance of Qigong experiments must strictly follow the fundamental principles of modern science: the presence of a control group, adequate sample size, double blind methodology, repeatability of experimental outcomes, stability of equipment and instruments, and consistency of experimental conditions. On the other hand, Qigong research has to take into account additional requirements: psychological characteristics of the

practitioner, different Qigong methods, and different levels of Qigong practice, as well as the subjects' mental and physical stability.

3. Adopting Approaches of Advanced Science and Technology, Enhancing Cooperation

Research on Qigong over the past decades has shown that the effects of Qigong practice are widespread and profound. Qigong research requires an interdisciplinary approach among biologists, psychologists, physiologists, engineers, and in the future maybe even physicists.

4. Enhancing Communication between Researchers and Subjects

Qigong research centers on the human, and requires both the subjects and the observer to compose a whole system. Being part of the unity of opposites, the subjects are not only objects of study, but active participants who must have cooperative relationships with the researchers. On the one hand, rules of scientific experiment should be strictly followed, and no negative factors should be permitted during the experiment. But on the other hand, the subjects should be valued for the purpose of giving full play to their enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity, since subjective experience plays an important role in Qigong.

B. Exploring the Mechanisms of the Qigong Effect

Extensive research on Qigong effects and Qigong phenomena are aimed at developing a deep connection between Qigong and modern scientific theory, models, and methodology. In order to achieve this goal, the following areas should be emphasized in research.

1. Enhancing Construction of the Theoretical System of Qigong Practice

The theoretical framework of Qigong study cannot be established without a profound understanding of the principles of Qigong practice and process. If this goal fails, research on Qigong by means of the approaches of modern science will not be complete. Establishing the theoretical framework of Qigong practice is also one of the important missions of Qigong study in Chinese medicine.

2. Doing Justice to the Innovation of Qigong Theory

The exploration of Qigong theory is in compliance with the requirement for modern research into it. However, Qigong ought not to be placed forcefully into the theoretical frame of modern science. Otherwise, the process of developing

Qigong theory could abandon the heritage and value of the ancient practice and be changed beyond recognition.

3. Reflecting the Development of Human Civilization

Human civilization in the 21st century calls for more extensive and profound understanding of the laws of life science or life principles, where the mind and body work as a unity, forming the essence of a human-nature relationship. Modern research on Qigong should put emphasis on the integration of modern scientific methodology and the ancient Chinese concept of holism. The development of a new worldview and methodology should be based on the dialectic unity of the spirit and the material, the whole and the part, the subjective and the objective, opposition and unity, intrapersonal and interpersonal. This would provide a foundation for the combining of Western modern science with Oriental classic culture, a new leap in the development of human civilization.

C. Main Issues in Dispute

From the 1950s up to today, there have been basically two matters of dispute concerning Qigong and its research. Presented in chronological order, the first discussion regards the definition or purpose of Qigong, and the second involves the existence and description of "external Qi."

1. Definition of Qigong

Controversy over the definition of Qigong started in the mid-1950s when Qigong therapy started gaining popularity, and continues to the present.

There have been three main opinions on this issue. First, Qigong practice is equivalent to psychological adjustment. Qigong therapy is, therefore, no more than a psychological therapy developed to be consistent with the characteristics of traditional Chinese culture. The second definition was based on the interpretation that Qi refers to the air,[ii] or in broader terms, the energy transformed from air and food to animate and sustain human life. Qigong is viewed as a method or technique to regulate the energy of life activities. Third, that Qigong consists of mental as well as physical maneuvering skills which apply to the adjustment of body posture, breathing, and mind. The core concept of this definition is the Qigong state of adjusting those three into one. This book holds the third view.

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ii "Air" in Chinese is also pronounced "Qi."

2. External Qi of Qigong

Debates on the issue of external Qi started in the late 1970s and have been even fiercer than the disputes on the definition of Qigong.

Three opinions remain. First, external Qi is a form of energy, similar to that of sound waves, lightwaves, electricity, or particles in physics. Though differing in intensity, it is of the same nature as the electromagnetic radiation of the human body. In a broader sense, it may be a form of energy still unmeasured and undefined. The second opinion is that external Qi is nothing but a psychological effect. Therefore, the therapeutic effect of external Qi is caused by psychological suggestion, and will disappear once the suggestion is removed. The third opinion is that the effect of external Qi partially results from psychological factors, but the possibility of its being caused by energy emitted by a practitioner cannot be excluded either.[3] Current research on external Qi is inadequate to draw any definite conclusion and further research is necessary. This book follows the last opinion.

In Sections 2 and 3, typical programs and conclusions with regard to Qigong research in the fields of physiology, psychology, biochemistry, immunology, and physics are introduced. The aim is to introduce readers to new possibilities, and familiarize them with the scope and methodology of modern research on Qigong. Please note that consensus has been achieved for the interpretation of some research results, but for other areas, interpretation is still in discussion.

In addition, results from any experiment are dependent on the Qigong methods selected and the levels of practitioner compliance and mastery. The effect induced by Qigong practice has a lot to do with both methods and application of practice. The result of experiments, for instance, may differ considerably for beginners and seasoned practitioners of either Relaxation Qigong or hard (martial-art) Qigong. Note that all the Qigong forms introduced in the following sections, if not specified, are of the relaxing and meditative type of Qigong, and the practitioners are experienced (masters), not beginners.

2. Physiological Effects of Qigong

In modern research on Qigong, studies of its physiological effects are abundant. Progress made in understanding human physiology together with application of new techniques and approaches since the 1950s have brought about a variety of more reliable research methodologies. In the wake of these advances, scientific measurements have also evolved from simple variables to more complex measurements and analysis. This section describes the measurable effects of Qigong on respiratory, cardiovascular, and nervous systems.

I. Effects of Qigong on the Respiratory System

The "three adjustments" (adjusting body, adjusting breath, and adjusting mind) are basic skills in Qigong practice. Because breath adjustment plays a key role in Qigong, and physical changes in respiration during Qigong practice are obviously seen, observing respiratory system function has been an important focus for research efforts. Many experimental observations have been made on variance in respiratory frequency, rhythm, depth, diaphragm movement, vital capacity, ventilatory capacity, and autonomic nerve system resulting from Qigong practice.

A. Effects on Respiratory Frequency, Rhythm, and Depth

Direct effects induced by Qigong have manifested in the variance of respiratory frequency, rhythm, depth, and rate, which were observed and analyzed according to an objectively recorded respiratory movement curve. The respiratory physiology in the process of Qigong practice, in particular static Qigong, displayed these features: as Qigong status went deeper, the respiratory cycle became longer, its rhythm slower, and its amplitude wider, and there is a tendency for respiratory movement to become more even and softer, manifesting in deep, long, slow, and regular breath.

In Qigong, respiratory frequency is dependent on the subject's level of proficiency in breath adjustment and the posture he/she takes—whether it is sitting, standing, or lying. As the meditative status goes deeper and the subject relaxes further, his/her respiratory frequency will decrease.

Adjustment of breathing involves reducing respiratory frequency naturally rather than through force. The basic level of energy and oxygen consumption is relevant to the posture one takes. Since energy consumption is greater in the standing posture than the lying, the decrease of respiratory frequency in the former case is less than that in the latter. Performing static Qigong in the seated position has been observed to reduce the subject's respiratory frequency from 18 to 20 times per minute, the normal rate for an adult, to 4 to 5 times per minute. Highly proficient practitioners have even been observed to have extremely slow respiratory rates around 1 to 2 times per minute, or even lower.[5]

While in the Qigong state during Qigong practice, ventilatory capacity can be about 28 percent lower due to the decrease of respiratory frequency, but the tidal capacity can be about 78 percent higher on average due to the increase of respiratory depth.[6] A higher oxygen uptake rate is observed and the oxygen saturation of blood maintains at a physiological level or becomes higher, which provides better conditions for cells to take in and utilize oxygen. Seasoned practitioners, therefore, won't suffer hypoxia even when keeping a

low respiratory frequency for a long period. This mechanism may be related to the change of respiratory pattern induced by Qigong practice.

B. Effect on Diaphragm Movement

The diaphragm is the principal muscle of respiration. Observed by X-ray, it is found that the amplitude of its movement is enlarged when one is engaged in static Qigong practice. In practicing Internal Nourishing Qigong, for instance, the amplitude of diaphragm movement can be about 150 mm, which is 3 to 4 times higher than the normal range.[5] One research project showed that the amplitude of diaphragm movement of the tuberculosis group when breathing deeply reached 59.7 mm on average, compared to the average 29.7 mm before they had been engaged in Qigong practice just two months prior.[5]

Amplitude of diaphragm movement and variance of the diaphragm muscle's shape, in a group of people diagnosed with chronic bronchitis, were recorded by X-ray both before and during their practice of Relaxation Qigong or Small Heavenly Circulation Qigong. The dislodged distance (DD) of the diaphragm muscle was observed using dislodged time (DT) mm/min to show its changing rate. Their transcutaneous pressure O2 (tcpO2) and transcutaneous pressure CO2 (tcpCO2) were also tested. The results showed that before practicing Relaxation Qigong, the mean DD of the diaphragm muscle during each respiratory cycle was 54.6 ± 14.8 mm, compared to a mean DD of 72.6 ± 23.6 mm during Qigong practice. The variation was significant according to statistical analysis which revealed that the t-value was 2.96 ($P<0.05$). Before practicing Small Circulation Qigong, the mean DD was 46.3 + 24.7 mm, compared to a mean DD of 95.4 ± 57.4 mm with a t-value of 3.68 ($P<0.01$) when they were engaged in it. Such variations were significant too. It was found that the t-value was 2.33 ($P<0.05$), comparing DD before and during the process of practicing Relaxation Qigong, and that the t-value was 3.68 ($P<0.01$), comparing DD before and during the process of practicing Small Heavenly Circulation Qigong.[7]

The prolonged dislodged distance of diaphragm muscle, the increase in respiratory amplitude, and decrease in respiratory frequency reduce the total amount of diaphragm movement as compared to the normal. The results indicate that the body condition has changed from energy consumption to energy storage. Moreover, breath adjustment helps the diaphragm exert a stronger massaging effect on abdominal viscera to strengthen visceral function by stimulating gastrointestinal peristalsis and blood circulation.

C. Effect on Vital Capacity and Ventilatory Capacity

Variance of respiratory function such as vital capacity, timed vital capacity, and maximal ventilatory volume has been observed. A self-comparison study about the change in respiratory function of 312 Health Preserving Qigong practitioners at a six-month interval was made by Shanghai Qigong Research Institute in 2002.[8] The results of the two tests showed that the SVC, FVC, and MVV increased ($P<0.05$) and that the F1.0 (first second exhalation rate) of practitioners over 60 years old increased as well ($P<0.1$). The findings indicated that consistent Qigong practice not only induced an increase in lung volume and respiratory capacity, but also improved such common syndromes as physiological respiratory obstruction among elders.

Experiments were also done with patients that had intractable bronchial asthma. Before and after Qigong practice the forced respiratory gas flow rate capacity and respiratory tract impedance were tested. It was found that the respiratory tract impedance was reduced from 5.63 ± 1.40 cm H2O/L/s to 2.90 ± 0.57 cm H2O/L/s, and that forced respiratory gas flow rate capacity was increased.[5] The findings showed improvement in respiratory function, which provided evidence that Qigong for treatment of bronchial asthma was valid.

Similar research has also been conducted abroad. Corey made use of capacity tracing equipment to test respiratory gas flow rate, intrapleural pressure, and thoracic gas volume (TGV). Respiratory tract impedance (R) was calculated using the measurements. Its reciprocal value (1/R) was referred to as respiratory tract admittance, (1/R)/TGV being the admittance ratio. Two groups' admittance ratio was observed before and after Qigong practice: the Qigong group ($N=7$) and the control group ($N=7$). The findings were significant in two areas. First, variance of the two groups' admittance ratio was totally different: the Qigong group's ratio increased considerably while the control group's remained the same. Second, in the Qigong group, the admittance ratio rose quickly by 12.1 percent ($P=0.0014$) on average, till up to about 20 percent at the end of the Qigong process. Though dropping quickly after Qigong practice, the admittance ratio was still 8 percent higher than the control group.[9] The findings indicate a remarkable improvement in respiratory function attributable to Qigong practice.

D. Effect on Autonomic Nervous System/Functions

Animal experiments have proven that parasympathetic nervous system activity can be increased by expanding the lung parenchyma. This results in lower heart rate and blood pressure, increased saliva secretion, and increased alimentary tract movement and bladder contraction. In contrast, sympathetic nervous system

activity increased in weakened lung parenchyma. This results in hypertension, decreased saliva secretion, dilation of the pupils of the eyes, and poor GI motility. It can therefore be deduced that breath adjustment exerts influence on the viscera and glands of the body through influencing the autonomic nervous system. Moving lung tissue affects the balance of parasympathetic and sympathetic activity.[5, 7]

In 2004 a joint research project was conducted by California University, USA, and Shanghai Qigong Research Institute. Subjects' respiratory frequency was synchronized with a metronome while respiration and heart rate were recorded concurrently. A comparison of the variance of respiratory and heart rate frequency showed that they were identical with each other. A stable respiratory frequency induced heart rate variance of identical frequency. The heart rate variability is a result of autonomic nervous system activity. Increased parasympathetic nervous system activity was positively associated with a greater range of heart rate variability.

These experiments showed that both the ratio of inhalation and exhalation time and the respiratory rate affect autonomic nervous system function. It can be deduced that breath adjustment plays a crucial role in achieving some of the physiological effects caused by Qigong practice. Meanwhile, the improper breathing patterns can have adverse health effects.

II. Effect of Qigong on the Cardiovascular System

The effect of Qigong on the cardiovascular system manifests in the variance of blood pressure, heart rate, heart rhythm, heart output, blood vessel volume, blood supply, pulse manifestation, microcirculation, and biochemical indicators of the blood.

A. Effect on Blood Pressure

It was first reported by Shanghai Hypertension Institute in 1959 that the symptoms of 32 patients suffering from stubborn hypertension for years with intolerance to anti-hypertensive drugs were improved to some extent after practicing Qigong for six months.[10] A follow-up study was done in 1962, observing 415 people with hypertension. It showed that 80.5 percent of the people practicing Qigong regularly and 17 percent of those practicing randomly maintained a stable blood pressure.[11]

The proposed mechanism to account for these results is that concentrating attention on a part of the body over a long time induces a confinement of the excitation focus to a certain part of the cerebral cortex. This produces an inhibition of activity in surrounding nervous tissue. This internal inhabitation

can serve the function of lowering blood pressure, decreasing the tension of the parasympathetic nerves and relaxing the blood vessels when it spreads to the hypothalamus, medulla oblongata, and cardiovascular center.

In 2002, another study followed the blood pressure of 312 patients practicing Health Preserving Qigong for six months. Subjects were observed to have decreased blood pressure ($P<0.01$) both at resting state and after practicing the Qigong movements. Such results were more obvious for patients who consistently practiced Qigong, compared to those who did not ($P<0.001$).[8]

The benefits of Qigong are not limited to its therapeutic effect on blood pressure, but includes its function of nurturing life and preserving health in general.

B. Effect on the Heart Rate and Heart Rhythm

Qigong has a dual-directional regulatory effect on the rhythm of cardiac cells. Cao *et al*. observed the changes in heart rate among Qigong practitioners during the process of entering tranquility. There were 16 people in the Qigong group and 11 people in the control group. After the Qigong group entered the Qigong (tranquility) state, there was a tendency for the heart rate to decrease. After 20 minutes, the heart rate decreased from 83.5 bpm on average to 75.3 bpm ($P<0.05$), and decreased further to 71.2 bpm after 30 minutes. The heart rate decrease was observed to last for 20 minutes after they were out of meditation. Though the heart rate of the control group also decreased, the rate decrease was not statistically significant.[7]

Qigong also serves the function of regulating cardiac dysrhythmias such as pre-excitation, bigeminy, trigeminy, premature ventricular contraction, and conduction block.[8] The mechanism is attributed to its effect of inducing the optimal condition for the cardiac conducting system through breath adjustment. The cardiac dysrhythmia is remodeled as a result of increased vital capacity, improved respiratory function and decreased myocardial anoxia, and normalized ectopic pacemaker.

C. Effect on the Heart Output

Cardiac output is an important indicator used to estimate cardiac function. While practicing Relaxing Quiescent Qigong, the cardiac output shows a tendency to decline, which may be related to lower energy consumption by the body. Decreased cardiac output is observed during the Qigong process. This decrease isn't necessarily sustained after practice. The majority of research has revealed that the heart output after Qigong practice is correlated with the level of heart output before practice. Cardiac output increases for subjects with a previously

low level and becomes lower for those with a previously abnormally high level. Such results indicate that Qigong practice has a dual-direction or balancing effect on cardiac output.[14]

In 2004, the research team on Health Qigong (Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic) employed an ultrasound Doppler diagnostic apparatus to test 39 Qigong practitioners. It was found that after six months of Qigong practice, the blood volume per heartbeat, ejection fraction, and cardiac output of the subjects increased significantly ($P<0.05$).[15]

D. Effect on the Pulse and Blood Supply of the Whole Body

For years, finger pulsation amplitude has been a cardiovascular indicator to measure the degree of Qigong status. It is reported that 2–3 minutes after the practitioner has entered into the Qigong meditative state, the finger vessels begin to dilate and pulsation amplitude increases. The maximum will be reached after 10–15 minutes when the blood vessel dilates to twice the normal value on average or occasionally even 4 to 5 times the original size. This change remains for 10 minutes after finishing Qigong practice, and then the value gradually returns back to normal.[13] There are a few exceptions which show either no change or even decline. While practicing Relaxing Quiescent Qigong, the increase in finger pulse amplitude is accompanied by a decline in the pulsation of the temporal artery and an increase in the resistance of the cerebral vessels. The reduction of blood volume flowing through the brain indicates a redistribution of blood in the body.[13]

Research has also been done using TCM pulse diagnosis. This diagnostic process assesses different body organ functions by palpating three different locations over the radial artery on both wrists. It is reported that a subject typically has a slippery pulse during Qigong practice, which manifests itself and disappears in fleeting moments. It is described as "The slippery pulse comes as soon as Qi arrives and disappears as soon as Qi goes away." This phenomenon shows that manipulating internal Qi can not only guide Qi and blood to the specified areas of the body, but also causes variance of pulse at Cun-kou, the convergence of pulses.

Researchers used an electro-pulsograph to test the pulse manifestation of the three pulse locations—Cun, Guan, and Chi—of two Qigong masters. The two masters were adept at two different methods of Qigong—Internal Nourishing Qigong and hard (martial) Qigong. When they were asked to consciously direct Qi to specific areas in the body—the chest, upper abdomen, or lower abdomen—there was a corresponding variance in the related pulse locations. The variance observed in the hard Qigong master was more significant than that in the Internal Nourishing Qigong master.[13]

These experimental results support the pulse manifestation theory in TCM that the Cun-kou pulse is relevant to Zang-Fu organs and offers an approach to probing into the connections between TCM theory and Qigong.

E. Effect on the Microcirculation System

Microcirculation refers to the blood circulation between micro-artery and micro-vein (capillary). Qigong practice has been reported to improve the practitioner's microcirculation, changing the viscosity of blood, increasing the elasticity of blood vessels, and controlling the concentration of platelets.[13]

It is also reported that Qigong practice induces thickened artery vessels, and an increased percentage of normal blood loop for patients with abnormal microcirculation. For example, the percentage of hypertensive patients who suffer from abnormal microcirculation identified by means of capillary loops on the nail bed is 67 percent, much higher than that of normal people, but this abnormality dropped to 31 percent after Qigong practice.[13]

Research was conducted to examine the change in nail microcirculation of normal people after 30 days of Qigong practice. Before engaging in Qigong practice, 42 out of 154 capillaries under observation were crossed and 34 were deformed, but after Qigong practice, the number of crossed and deformed capillaries was reduced by 14.3 percent and 11.2 percent respectively.[13]

In terms of the effect of Qigong on improving the rate of blood flow, it was found that 80 percent of the vessel in the granula linear stream reduced to 20 percent after Qigong practice. The finding suggests that Qigong practice is good for patients suffering from a degenerative change in the blood vessel wall or slow movement of blood.[13]

F. Effects on Elasticity of Cerebral Vessels and Blood Supply to the Brain

Qigong can improve both the elasticity of blood vessels and cerebral blood circulation. Qigong intervention induces the change of rheo-encephalogram waveform from a sinusoidal or oblique one to turn-wave or tri-peak wave, accompanied by a rise at the turning point, the emergence of the dicrotic wave, and the shortening of inflow time. Qigong practice is associated with increasing blood vessel elasticity, which leads to decreased tension of the artery wall.[13]

It was also found that cerebral blood flow related to the practice of breath adjustment. The magnitude of rheo-encephalogram, for instance, dropped from 0.187 Ω to 0.160 Ω, two minutes after deep inhalation and exhalation was employed, but rose from 0.154 Ω to 0.170 Ω 30 minutes after employing the Holding Breath method. The test result is identical with that obtained from

direct observation of animal cerebral pia mater microcirculation. If practicing Relaxing Quiescent Qigong but not practicing breath adjustment, the magnitude of rheo-encephalogram shows a tendency to decline.

G. Effect on Biochemical Indicators of the Blood

A study published in 1989 documented that after six months of Qigong practice, triglyceride and cholesterol of 30 hypertension cases dropped but their high-density lipoprotein (HDL) increased, while the control group of 30 cases manifested little change.[13] A report published in 1990 said that triglycerides, total cholesterol, and apolipoprotein were lower in the Qigong group than those in the control group. After one year's Qigong practice, HDL and its sub-type correlated negatively to coronary heart disease, and arteriosclerosis increased considerably.

Concerning research on red blood cell agglutination, a report published in 1986 said that after practicing standing post Qigong for three months, whole blood agglutination and plasma viscosity fell considerably in 51 cases. A study published in 1989 showed that the blood viscosity and aggregation of platelets of 100 people diagnosed with hypertension dropped significantly after practicing Qigong methods that integrated the meditative with the dynamic movement. A study published in 1990 showed that the whole blood viscosity and red cell electrophoresis ratio of 150 hypertension cases dropped considerably after practicing Relaxing Quiescent Qigong.[13]

This research supports the contention that Qigong practice can exert a definite influence on biochemical blood measures. The practice promotes blood circulation and removes blood stasis (reduces blood coagulation) by reducing blood viscosity. It follows that Qigong can be adopted to prevent and treat ischemic stroke, coronary heart disease, and so on.

III. Effects of Qigong on Neuroelectrophysiology

The study of the effects of Qigong on neuroelectrophysiology has an important place in modern research on Qigong. Research in this area has measured effects of Qigong practice (mostly self-practice meditation status, and some external Qi emission status) on spontaneous electroencephalographic waves, evoked electroencephalographic waves, and neurotransmitters. The introduction of the ET scan brain technique into Qigong research has also led to many new discoveries.

A. Effect on Spontaneous Potential

The first report describing the effect of Qigong on spontaneous potential was published in 1959. The EEG record of a group of Internal Nourishing Qigong practitioners showed that α-wave amplitude increased while its frequency decreased, and the wave was observed to spread from the occipital lobe to the frontal lobe.[5, 6] A subsequent report documented that the θ-wave discovered at the frontal lobe spread to the back of the cerebral cortex.[5] It also showed an increase in amplitude and a trend towards decreased frequency. The amplitude of α-waves either stayed the same or increased a little. The α-wave index of EEG reflects the degree of tranquility, and α-wave rhythm can be attenuated by any initiating activity. An increase in α-wave amplitude can therefore represent a degree of tranquility obtained during Qigong practice.

It is reported that the more proficient the Qigong practitioner is, the closer is his/her brain α-wave frequency to 8 Hz.[16] There is a so-called Humann-wave at the frequency of 7.83 Hz among the earth's magnetic field, which is very close to the brain α-wave frequency observed in highly proficient Qigong practitioners. It follows that the resonant vibration between the electro-magnetic field of the human brain and that of the earth provides a physical model for the classic Chinese Qigong theory of "the Heaven and Men are united into Oneness."

In 1971, Benson and Wallace of Harvard University were among the first to observe the spontaneous brain waves of practitioners with power spectrum analysis during the practice of Relaxing Quiescent Qigong. They used the directly simple power spectrum to represent the energy increase in α-wave frequency.

Further study with the same method was conducted at the Institute of Aviation Medicine in 1982.[13, 16] The results were:

1. The energy in α-wave frequencies increased.
2. The energy in the frontal lobe was higher than that in the occipital lobe before Qigong practice, but the reverse was true after practice, which was referred to as the frontal-occipital reversion phenomenon.
3. The frequency of α-waves shifted to the left, and decreased to 7.5–8 Hz.

Based on electroencephalography applying systemic scientific theory, ET technique of Aviation Medicine regards the human brain as an open and complicated brain wave system, and conducts systemic analyses on it with multi-parameters, using multi-branches, multi-depth, and multi-dimension. In 1984, while applying the ET technique to measure brain activities during the Qigong state, researchers at the Traditional Chinese Medical Institute of Guangzhou

accidentally discovered that the symmetrical balanced concentration status of the cerebral cortex dominant portion displays a "Taiji Graph of the Up/Down Brain Wave." At this moment, the brain wave active power ratio of the left frontal cortex and the right occipital cortex is 0.618, which is the ratio of the Golden Cut. Two portions of the brain establish a related, antagonized crossing structure, which reflects a relatively balanced and steady brain function status. When the cortex is in its "exciting" period, the brain wave active power mostly concentrates on the left side of the brain, and the dominant activity point is located at the left frontal area on the "Exciting Graph of the Up/Down Brain Wave" (Yang-1) positive-charged electrical source. When the cortex is in its "inhibited" period, the brain wave active power mostly concentrates on the right side of the brain, and the dominant activity point is located at the right posterior area on the "Inhibited Graph of the Up/Down Brain Wave." This study result matches the theory of Chinese Qigong, which states that Yin and Yang are rooted together and depend on each other, and that they are opposite, antagonized, and may relatively fluctuate to maintain the balance.

Shanghai Qigong Research Institute has also published research in this area. In 1996 they used the up-to-date AR model spectrum estimation and chaos signal correlate dimension to analyze spontaneous brain waves, and established two indicators to assess degree of consciousness and meditation in meditative Qigong. The two indicators of the 24 subjects with a long history of Qigong practice increased considerably during Qigong practice, and returned back to normal quickly afterwards. In a Qigong group of 31 cases, the two indicators of both concentration and meditation increased after three to seven months of practice, while in the control group of 25 cases, only the concentration indicator increased. In 2000, by means of synchronal data sampling of respiratory waves, ECG, and EEG, together with 32K FFT algorithm and various estimate methods, and estimated with a different model, two models of Qigong methods were established based on two different Qigong instructors. In 2004, the energy distribution brain wave frequency and distribution pattern of 99 practitioners of Health Qigong was tested three times every six months. The data showed that the α-wave distribution of the individual varied wildly, but was very stable taken as a whole.[8] The results indicate that the level of Qigong practice is related not only to the practice of Qigong, but also to one's potential, including prenatal factors and the thinking habits one has developed. This rule applies equally to those who have a long history of Qigong practice. The application of the long power spectrum together with the short one is suggested as a method for measuring the basic potential and regulating ability of the practitioner in order to estimate his/her achievement in Qigong learning and practice.

In 2008, one of the national natural science fund's projects, a "physiological and mental dual directional study on Shaolin Zen-style practitioners," was

conducted at the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine. The physiological and mental index of each individual from a real Shaolin Zen-style practice group and from a mimic Shaolin Zen-style group were observed and measured synchronously in different time periods during the Qigong practice. The results of Qigong influence on the physiological and mental index were compared individually before and after Qigong practice, as well as between the two groups. They showed as follows: (1) while in the Zen-style Qigong state, the amplifier of the brain electrical wave is high and the frequency is high and low, which indicates the brain activity during Zen Qigong practice has the high energy characteristic; (2) the characteristics of the brain wave in Zen Qigong state: (a) α1 high power, α2 dissimilation appears; (b) the main brain waves are θ, α1, and α2, simultaneously companied by a β1 and β2 relatively high energy wave; (c) advantage frequency is 6.313–6.544 Hz, which is lower than the mimic Zen Qigong state; (3) the amplifier and intensity of the electrical brain wave are higher than normal; (4) the absolute energy of the electrical brain wave in a Zen Qigong state appears as a three-dimensional distributed interrupted belt-shaped wave; and the brain activities as a layer-by-layer organized, strongly targeted thinking operation suggested at the time that the thinking type was perceptual thinking.

According to the results of this research, the change of the brain wave during Qigong practice had a close relationship with the Qigong methods adopted and personal thinking mode, so the mechanism is rather difficult to illustrate. Although much progress has been made, there is still a long way to go in this field.

B. Effect on Evoked Potential

The evoked potential is the potential formed in the cerebral cortex by sensation due to the stimulus conducted from the afferent nerves. It consists of primary response and after-potential, which can be obtained with the multiple super positions method done by computer. In Qigong research, the function of the cerebral cortex is tested by analyzing the amplitude of the evoked potential.

The results of a series of studies reported in 1988 showed that the evoked potential of the auditory cortex, such as Po, Na, and Pa, distributed differently and most of them decreased during Qigong practice. Among them, Na decreased by 72 percent, but turned back to normal after Qigong practice. Compared with the normal condition, slow response of the auditory cortex such as P1, N1, P2, N2, and N3 during the Qigong process became lower, and those of two subjects even disappeared. Vision flaring and the ingredients of figure evoked potential were inhibited extensively, and the ingredients of evoked potential in the sensory area of the cortex were inhibited to different

extents in most subjects. These results revealed that the activity of most of the cerebral cortex was low and in an inhibitory state.[17]

According to additional studies, wave I to wave IV of the evoked response from the auditory brainstem structures increased somewhat, but wave VI was inhibited during the process of Qigong practice.[18] Based on the fact that the brainstem is where the autonomic nervous system controls visceral activities, the author believes these experimental results are supportive of the theory that in Qigong practice "the brain is quiescent while the viscera are active" and that one should "seek motion in tranquility."

It has also been reported that electrocochleogram and retroauricular potentials are increased during Qigong. The former case indicates that auditory sensitivity is increased. As the retroauricular potential is a form of feedback regulation on the auditory function and its reflex center is located at the brainstem, the increase in the latter indicates that the brainstem function was facilitated during Qigong practice.

Evoked potential reflects brain wave activity under the external stimuli, which has definite physiological significance. However, the extent of the influence of external stimuli on the Qigong state is a question remaining to be answered in further researches on Qigong-induced evoked potential.

C. Effect on Neurotransmitters

It is well-documented that Qigong affects the electrical activity of the central nervous system. Remaining questions include: what are the neurotransmitters involved in the process and what is the mechanism for the measured effects? This is a fairly new area of research, and as yet there is little experimental data. It was reported that in a Qigong meditative state the potential energy of the right hemisphere was brought into an optimal state; meanwhile in the CNS, the content of 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP) increased, dopamine decreased, and the metabolism of norepinephrine fell by 60 percent. It was also reported that frequent Qigong practice rendered the production and excretion rate of 5-HTP 2 to 3 times higher than the normal.[7, 19]

Some research shows that 5-HTP in the cerebrum could inhibit the excretion of norepinephrine, and such enhanced function of 5-HTP was relevant to the effects of Qigong.[20] Through Qigong practice, excretion of the cortical hormone in blood plasma can be reduced to half of the normal amount, which can enhance the immunological system of the human body. Furthermore, as 90 percent of 5-HTP stays in the gastrointestinal tract while the rest is in platelets and CNS, Qigong practice of a high level may bring about a decrease in food intake, or even total food abandonment.

The enhanced function of 5-HTP can improve sleep quality as well, which manifests as ease in falling asleep and high quality sleep. Along with the improvement of 5-HTP, secretion of the growth hormone during the sleep period increases, which can stimulate growth and accelerate the recovery of physical strength.

As 5-HTP can inhibit and stabilize the nerve activity, the improvement in its function provides conditions for the brain to have sufficient relaxation and rest, and improve the sub-consciousness to induce the potency of the human body.

From a psychopathological point of view, some researchers indicate that an imbalance of 5-HTP gives rise to affective disorders, so schizophrenia is directly related to the abnormal metabolism of 5-HTP. Experimental data shows that the metabolic products of 5-HTP in cerebrospinal fluid is higher in manic and depressed patients than in normal people, which illustrates a possible mechanism of Qigong on treating both physical and mental problems.

5-HTP can inhibit the function of dopamine. It has been proven that the abnormal decrease of dopamine in the brain is one of the most important etiological factors of Parkinson's disease and somnolence. Appropriate Qigong practice can keep people from getting Parkinson's disease and excessive somnolence. Statistics show that the content of dopamine in the brain of introverted (内向型) people is lower than that in the brain of extroverted people. Dual-directional regulation or balancing levels of dopamine can, as a matter of fact, adjust characters in two ways: bringing gentleness to those who are irritable, and influencing unsociable personalities to be more broad-minded. It provides Taiji Quan with a means for changing the character of its practitioners, which is also true with Qigong practice.

The chemical construction of enkephalin is similar to acetomorphine, both of which can promote a strong sense of pleasure.[13] Statistics show that the effect of enkephalin is 10 to 100 times stronger than that of acetomorphine. Scientific Qigong practice can stimulate the secretion of enkephalin, which brings about a sense of comfort and pleasure, and helps tranquilize the mind and relieve pain. Secretion of enkephalin can also enhance the function of the brain—the ability to analyze and make judgments—and promote mentality by improving the bioactivity of ribonucleic acid (RNA).

3. Psychological Effects of Qigong

The mechanism of mind adjustment in Qigong practice has been an essential subject of modern psychology study. The features manifested in the psychological process and phenomena in the course of mind adjustment are specific subjects

in introspection study, experimental psychology, and psychometric study. Extensive research on these distinct aspects can broaden the spectrum of modern psychology study.

Modern research on the mechanism of mind adjustment and the role emotional factors play in external Qi treatment are as follows.

I. Operational Mechanism of Adjusting Mind in Qigong Practice

Psychologically speaking, mind adjustment includes thinking maneuvers and emotional maneuvers, the former being present in most Qigong methods. Knowing the means and characteristics of both thinking and emotional maneuvers can help illustrate the mechanism of mind adjustment on a psychological basis.

A. Thinking Maneuvers

Mental activities in Qigong practice are quite distinct from that in everyday life mainly in respect to the thinking form. The rudimental requirement for the thinking maneuver in mind adjustment is, therefore, transforming the basic thinking form from abstract (language-based) and imaginal thinking into perceptual thinking.

From the perspective of psychology, mental activities are intentional maneuvers, which can be categorized by subject—words or images.[21] Using verbal symbols such as language, abstract thinking refers to the mental activity of manipulating words, such as speaking and writing. Imaginal thinking refers to the mental activity of manipulating images. The so-called image is the picture conjured up in the mind or in memory when people imagine the future or recall the past. Perceptual thinking refers to the mental activity of manipulating the object-image, taking the object-image as media. Object-image here refers to the perception and action itself, through which the mind manipulates perception or action directly rather than by means of abstract or imaginal reflection. Focusing mental activity on the elixir field, for instance, is neither a verbal symbol nor an image about concentration; instead it is used to induce a sense of genuine Qi replenishing at the elixir field. Such is perceptual thinking. One cannot really get into the required Qigong state if the mind is centered in the elixir field by means of abstract or imaginal thinking.[21]

These three thinking forms permeate, mixing with each other, and cannot be separated definitively. It is quite often the case that in the process of thinking, one form takes priority while the others are accessory. The focused application

of only one thinking form is rare. Although abstract and imaginal thinking are commonly used, perceptual thinking is only randomly employed in everyday life. It is crucial in the adjustment of mind to gradually abandon words and images, and so to improve the capacity for perceptual thinking which connects the perception and action directly with the mental activity.

In Qigong practice, mind concentration, mind-reach (focusing and observing), and entering a tranquil meditation state are commonly used techniques. Differentiating between imaginal and perceptual thinking is important in mind concentration and mind-reach. As mentioned above, imaginal thinking is conducted in terms of an image based on memory and imagination of impression, which is vague and blurry. If applied to mind concentration and mind-reach, it can hardly induce the desired effects. Founded on present-moment object-image, perceptual thinking is directly linked to perception and impression itself and is very vivid and distinct. It can construct the mental reflection required in both mind concentration and mind-reach. When we think of our family members, the picture conjured up in the mind is the image, but when we dream of them, what we visualize is the object-image. They are both perceptual but differ greatly in the degree of verisimilitude, as the object-image brings about a more deeply immersed sense than the image. As the former exerts far more influence on the body and mind, mind concentrating and mind-reaching the object-image can induce more desirable effects.

Many beginners adjust the mind only at the imaginal level, which is far from enough and explains the slow progress in practice. Only when the perceptual level is raised to an object-image can the Qigong state be attained, and the effects of mind concentration and mind-reach be brought to full play. Perceptual thinking also plays a part in the process of entering a tranquil meditation state, as it is directly conducted by the mind and is the approach to obtaining the status of "body and mind being one" or even "heaven and men are being oneness."

In 2007, directed by Professor Tianjun Liu at the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, the students from his doctor degree program conducted a special study, which was "the study on the electrical brain wave of perceptual thinking and its related psychophysical characteristics during Qigong practice." It is the only scientific experimental study on perceptual thinking that has been carried out so far in China or elsewhere. Selected multiple thinking subjects separately conducted three forms of thinking operation on perceptual, abstract, and imaginal thinking, at the same time being monitored for the electrical waves of the brain and measured for the psychophysical characteristics with different instruments and means: the statistical data from all the measurements on each thinking form from different thinking subjects was then analyzed. The study produced the following conclusion: perceptual thinking is a unique thinking

form, separate from imaginal thinking and abstract thinking. Perceptual thinking has the highest operation of intensity among these three forms of thinking; its electrical brain wave manifested high frequency in the left frontal area (FP1) and left parietal area (F7); α1 frequency band in the left central area (C3) reduces synchronism; advantage frequency concentrates in 14.25–14.50 Hz belong to the β wave; and it is higher in FP1, C4, and F7 areas and lower in C3 and O2 (occipital) areas.

B. Emotional Maneuvers

Mind and emotion are closely linked: emotional disturbance is often accompanied by a troubled mind, while peaceful emotions can lead to a tranquil mind. Therefore, mind adjustment is usually practiced by adjusting either thoughts or emotions.[21]

Psychologically speaking, emotion is one's attitude toward things and the corresponding behavioral reaction to them. The individual is thus able to control his/her emotion by self-controlling attitude and behavior. Emotion is represented by the two extremes of agitation or calm, the latter being the essential emotion for Qigong practice. The behavioral regulation of emotion proposes that during the process of Qigong practice, calmness can be obtained by relaxing the body, and with the relaxation of muscles, emotions can also relax.

The fundamental principles of Qigong practice, relaxation and tranquility, can be described as follows. Relaxation concerns relaxing the body, and the latter concerns making tranquil the emotions, which reflects the innate connection between body adjustment and mind adjustment. The desired emotion can be induced by imagining a specific setting. For example, some methods induce a tranquil emotion by imagining a sunrise on the grassland or waves on the ocean, and induce cheerful emotions by recalling happy events like childhood merriment, reunion with family members, and so on. These emotional maneuvers are often carried out together with thinking maneuvers, especially in mind-reach, so that the two maneuvers can be integrated more effectively.

The purpose of emotional maneuvers is to make tranquil the emotions, which determines the progress of "concentration power" (定力) in Qigong practice. The so-called concentration power is defined by the ability to stay focused and overcome all disturbing thoughts, namely the ability to turn an unseeing eye and a deaf ear to all distractions. This power is a fundamental element in both entering and sustaining the Qigong (tranquility) state. The key to developing the ability is to be able to settle the emotions in order to stabilize

the mental state. Thus, it can be inferred that the success of Qigong practice is closely linked with the success in making the emotions tranquil.

Mind adjustment in most Qigong methods is focused on the thinking maneuver with the intention of excluding all stray thoughts that result from emotional disturbance. Better results can be obtained from mind adjustment once the emotions are settled. Otherwise, mind adjustment prior to emotional adjustment might result in half the results with twice the effort.

II. Psychological Elements of External Qi Therapy

Recent reports on external Qi have raised much controversy. The debate is mainly on whether the effects of external Qi are caused by psychological or physical factors. This question arises from the fact that the theoretical understanding of external Qi is not incongruent with its clinical effects.[3, 7]

A. Theoretical Meaning of External Qi

According to TCM theory, external Qi results from the emission of internal Qi. Since internal Qi is considered the basic and vital substance to maintain the life activities of human life, external Qi should be considered to have the similar life-maintenance properties.

From the perspective of modern science, external Qi could be considered as a "field" in physics and is assumed, in lab research, as an unknown physical factor which is able to produce effects. The experimental assumption could be expressed as: external Qi is a non-contact influential factor emitted and controlled by the intention or consciousness of experienced Qigong practitioners, which is different from the non-contact effects in a human natural state in terms of its physical, chemical, and biological nature and/or effects. Many scientific studies have documented the non-contact effects of external Qi on the physical, chemical, and biological sensors used in the study of external Qi.[3, 22]

The above statements make it quite clear that external Qi is not psychological either in the perspective of TCM theory or modern science. Therefore, its effects should not just be psychological.

B. Clinical Effects of External Qi Healing

From the psychological perspective, every interaction between humans can inevitably be somewhat psychologically suggestive. Treatment with external Qi being such an interaction, its clinical effects are also in a way psychologically suggestive.

External Qi treatment has some similarity with suggestive therapeutics in that they both take advantage of the psychological predisposition of humans toward suggestion.[7] Psychological suggestion exerts a subtle, indirect influence on man's psychology and behavior by means of the words, gesture, and attitude of the therapist or through the facilities and locations. In external Qi treatment, the therapist's words, behavior, and the articles he/she employs are all psychologically suggestive, but it is distinct from suggestive therapeutics in some respects. For instance, suggestive therapy is usually given by the therapist, and the patient simply plays the role of a passive receiver of suggestions; while in Qigong treatment, the patient is actively involved in therapy through self-regulation, self-treatment, and self-preservation instead of relying on the therapist. Meanwhile it should be mentioned that psychological suggestion is present in all therapeutic relations, and not limited to Qigong treatment. Even the behavior of going to the hospital itself is laden with psychological suggestion: seeing doctors in white coats may help the patients calm down and give them hope, which is in itself very helpful for the treatment.[iii]

Different from other therapies, external Qi treatment does not exclude the psychological effect; it tends to emphasize such an effect and extend it as well. By putting the emphasis on conviction, inducing varied sensations, and affirming mental and physical responses, patients may become influenced by the power of suggestion. These approaches are justified if they serve the purpose of obtaining better curative effects, but fall short if the effects obtained through them are attributed to external Qi.

Giving assurance to the physical ability of external Qi by its treatment effect is not convincing because psychological suggestion can also induce potent physical and psychological reactions and exert curative effects on certain diseases. For example, hypnosis based on psychological suggestion has induced assorted illusions and such strong analgesic effects that it was used to provide surgical anesthesia in clinics centuries ago. Historically, some of the effects obtained through hypnosis are similar to those obtained through external Qi. Therefore, under certain conditions, psychological suggestion alone can obtain some good treatment effects. It is for this reason that some researchers hold external Qi treatment to be nothing more than a psychological suggestion, the mechanism of which is similar to that of a placebo, and that if suggestion is removed, the effect will also be lost.[23] In a clinic, some diseases have been improved, and some difficult and complicated diseases have even been cured through external Qi treatment. Further studies reveal that these patients are more sensitive to suggestion and compliant with external Qi treatment.

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iii Sometimes it may have the opposite effect, leading to the well-documented "white coat" hypertension.

Although part of the therapeutic response to external Qi may be a result of psychological suggestion, that does not negate the possibility that other factors may contribute to physical clinical effects. In fact, other researchers maintain that effects of external Qi are both suggestive and substantial. Experiments conducted since the 1970s have neither confirmed nor denied the substantiality of external Qi partially because complicated design and implementation made the experiments very difficult.[22] For instance, external Qi cannot be proved substantially without blocking psychological suggestion, but if suggestion is completely excluded, the subtle substance and information conveyed by external Qi may be interrupted or even blocked. Moreover, it is hardly feasible to totally exclude suggestion in clinic treatment with external Qi. In view of substantiality or of the limits of modern technology, there still seems to be a long way to go before physical material disputes over the external nature of Qi can be settled.

To conclude, in Qigong therapy, both self-regulation and external Qi treatment are relevant to modern psychological therapy. In the Qigong state of "void and nothingness" the practitioner's reactions are similar to self-actualization and peak experience in humanistic psychology. The calm, peaceful state obtained in Qigong practice is good for psychological and physical health. Recently, many studies using the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, Psychophylaxis Self-Evaluation Questionnaire, Depression Self-Evaluation Questionnaire, and Anxiety Self-Evaluation Questionnaire have found that Qigong practitioners are significantly better in many indicators such as interpersonal relations, depression, anxiety, hypochondriasis, hysteria, psychopathic personality, hysteria, and social introversion. It can thus be seen clearly that Qigong practice exerts a positive influence on the individual's psychology and can optimize the personality. Nowadays, some techniques in TCM Qigong therapy have been applied with modern psychological treatment and have gradually become part of modern psychology, and some textbooks even include a separate chapter entitled "Qigong therapy."

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PART II

Practical Methods and Skills

CHAPTER 4

Basic Operations of Qigong Practice

Qigong practice mainly focuses on the adjustment (or alignment) of the body, the breath, and the mind, collectively known as the "three adjustments." Every form of Qigong is based on the three adjustments. Since every aspect of the human autonomic system involves the body, breath, and mind, the three adjustments is important not only for Qigong practice, but is also essential for all daily activities. Qigong practice regulates autonomic conditioning to its optimal state, maximizes the body to its fullest potential, and enhances life at all levels, be it physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual.

The goal of Qigong practice is to attain a state of Oneness, where the three adjustments are fully integrated. The process of reaching this state of Oneness in Qigong may initially require the practice of the three adjustments separately, but will gradually bring the body, breath, and mind into a profound state of Oneness.

1. Adjustment of Body

The first of the three adjustments—adjusting body posture—is also known as "posture training" (Lian Xing, 炼形) or "body movement skills" (Shen Fa, 身法). Lian Xing refers to adjusting the body posture while at rest, that is "stillness," which is required to reach mental tranquility. Shen Fa refers to adjusting the body in motion, that is "dynamic" adjustment, in which physical movements balance the meridians and induce the flow of internal Qi. The purpose of adjusting the body is making the postures and body condition correspond to the Qigong state. In addition, certain postures and movements in both Lian Xing and Shen Fa have health preserving and therapeutic effects.

There are two kinds of body posture adjustments: external and internal. The two affect and complement each other. External adjustment focuses on external posture and position; while internal adjustment focuses on internal feelings and the relationships of body parts.

I. External Adjustments

External adjustments include adjusting both the still body postures and dynamic body movements. The two are distinctly separate but related to each other. Dynamic body movements consist of individual body postures fluidly connected together, while still body postures are building-block snapshots for each dynamic movement. Body posture and movement flow into each other—from stillness to movement and movement to stillness.

A. Posture Practices

The most common body postures in Qigong practice, mostly used in static Qigong, are standing, sitting, and lying down.

1. Standing Posture

Standing posture is the basic body posture for "standing post" Qigong. The different types and styles of standing posture include the following.

Holding-Ball Style (抱球式); a.k.a. Three-Circle Type (三圆式)

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and toes slightly inward, forming an image of the Chinese character "eight" (八). Some forms require standing with the feet either parallel or turned slightly outwards. Gently grasp the ground with the five toes and flex the knees slightly, ensuring that the knees do not pass the tips of the feet. Extend the waist and stand as if sitting on a high stool. Keep the upper body upright and draw in the chest while straightening the back. Form a horizontal semicircle with the arms in front of the body as if holding a round balloon. Relax the shoulders, drop the elbows, and "empty" the armpits. The arms should be slightly away from the body, about one foot away. Hold the fingers of each hand opposite to the other at a distance of about 8–9 inches. Keep the five fingers separated, approximately one finger-width apart, and slightly curved. Keep the head upright and eyes lightly closed. Place the tongue naturally in the mouth rather than pressing it against the palate; draw the lower jaw slightly inward.

Relax your whole body in this posture. "Three circles" refers to the circle of the feet, the circle of the arms, and the circle of the hands respectively (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Holding-ball style (抱球式), or three-circle type, is the basic body posture for standing post Qigong

Raising-Ball, Pressing-Ball, and Lifting-Ball Styles (托球式, 扶按式, 提抱式)

These three postures stem from the holding-ball style, and can be used interchangeably in practice. One should however avoid changing postures too often lest it exert a negative effect on the Qigong state.

Raising-ball style (Figure 4.2): In the standing posture, lift both arms gently and extend them slightly to the front. Keep your hands at a distance of one foot from the body. Turn both palms upward with fingers slightly separated, as if raising a balloon. Stand in basically the same position as the holding-ball posture. If your arms become tired in the initial stage of practice, gently turn both hands upward and extend them slightly forward to alleviate fatigue.

Figure 4.2 Raising-ball style (托球式), stems from the holding-ball style. Keep your hands at a distance of one foot from the body, as if raising a balloon

Pressing-ball style (Figure 4.3): Lift the arms and extend them forward, with palms facing downward and fingers separated as if pressing on a table or the back of a chair, or as if pressing on water. Stand in basically the same posture as the holding-ball style. During the initial stage of the holding-ball style, change your arms to this style when they become tired.

Figure 4.3 Pressing-ball style (扶按式) stems from the holding-ball style. Lift the arms and extend them forward, with palms facing downward and fingers separated as if pressing on a table

Lifting-ball style (also known as floating-lifting style) (Figure 4.4): When first practicing the holding-ball style, if shoulders and arms become tired, drop both hands down below the navel with palms facing upwards. Hold the fingers of each hand opposite the other, at a distance of about 8 to 9 inches. Maintain the hands as if holding and lifting a balloon approximately 5 or 6 inches away from your body.

When practicing this style, be sure to "empty" the armpits by keeping the arms slightly away from the body.

Figure 4.4 Lifting-ball style (提抱式) stems from the holding-ball style. Drop both hands down below the navel with palms facing upwards

Resting Style

This posture is basically identical to the three-circle style except the arms are extended backwards, not hanging along the side of the body. Turn the elbows outwards, so that the backs of the hands gently touch the hipbone just beneath the waist.

This posture requires fewer movements and helps relieve the fatigue of the arms during the initial stage of practice, and is therefore called resting style (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 Resting style stems from the holding-ball style. The backs of the hands gently touch the hipbone just beneath the waist

2. Sitting Posture

The sitting posture is the most commonly used posture in static Qigong. The three sitting postures are plain sitting, cross-legged sitting, and leaning sitting.

Plain Sitting

This is the best position in which to begin the sitting posture practices. Sit on a square stool or a hard chair. It is imperative to sit only on the front one third of the seat, rather than sitting fully back. The height of the stool or legs of the chair should be the same as the length of your lower legs. After sitting down, hold your thighs parallel to the ground, with knees bent at 90°, legs shoulder-width apart, and feet flat on the ground.

The posture of the upper body, waist, and head is the same as that in the standing form. Your buttocks will naturally protrude slightly backwards. Hold your arms as in the holding-ball or raising-ball form. The second alternative posture is to spread the elbows outward with palms facing downwards, resting at the base of the thighs. The third alternative is to let the arms hang naturally beside the body, with the two hands lightly placed on the thighs (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 Plain sitting, the best position to begin the sitting posture practices

Cross-Legged Sitting

Cross-legged sitting is the most suitable posture for still Qigong practice. There are three styles: natural cross-legged sitting, single cross-legged sitting, and double cross-legged sitting.

Natural cross-legged sitting (Figure 4.7): Keep your head erect and mouth and eyes slightly closed. Relax your shoulders, drop the elbows, draw in your chest, straighten your back, and extend your waist naturally. Cross the two legs with one on top of the other, and place the feet on a cushion under the opposite knee. Lower your arms naturally and place the hands on your thighs or knees, or keep them slightly clasped over the lower elixir (Dan Tiao, 丹田). You can sit on a cushion of approximately 1–2 inches.

Figure 4.7 Natural cross-legged sitting. Cross the two legs with either one folding over the other, and place the feet on a cushion under the opposite knee

Single cross-legged sitting (Figure 4.8): The postures of the head, trunk, and arms are the same as those in natural cross-legged sitting, except that only one calf is over the opposite thigh—either the left over the right or vice versa, according to preference. In this style, one foot remains on the cushion.

Figure 4.8 Single cross-legged sitting. One foot remains on the cushion and one calf is over the opposite thigh

Double cross-legged sitting (Figure 4.9): The postures of the head, trunk, and arms are the same as those in natural cross-legged sitting. Sit with the calves crossed by placing each foot on the opposite thigh with both soles facing upward without touching the cushion. This is the most common posture used for sitting meditation by monks or nuns.

Figure 4.9 Double cross-legged sitting (a.k.a. lotus style). Sit with the calves crossed by placing each foot on the opposite thigh with both soles facing upward without touching the cushion. This is the most common posture used for sitting meditation

Leaning Sitting

The leaning sitting posture is the same as the plain sitting posture, except that you lean your upper back slightly on a chair or sofa and may extend the feet slightly forwards. Pay attention to keeping the waist straight and not touching the back of the chair (Figure 4.10).

Figure 4.10 Leaning sitting. Lean your upper back slightly on a chair or sofa

3. Lying Posture

The lying posture includes supine, lateral recumbent, and semi-reclining positions. The height of the pillow should be approximately 10 cm, or the same as one's shoulder width, so that the head is in a horizontal position while lying on one's side. The bed should not be too soft and suitable bedding should be added.

Supine position

The supine position is the basic lying posture. Lie flat on your back in bed, keeping the head straight and facing up with mouth and eyes lightly closed. Stretch out the limbs naturally, keeping your legs slightly apart, or closed, depending on what is most comfortable for you. Tilt your two feet naturally toward the sides and stretch the tip of your toes forward. Place both arms naturally beside the body, with palms facing inward and slightly touching the thighs. You can also bend your arms inward and place your hands on your lower elixir. Males should place the right hand on top of the left and females should place the left hand on top of the right (Figure 4.11).

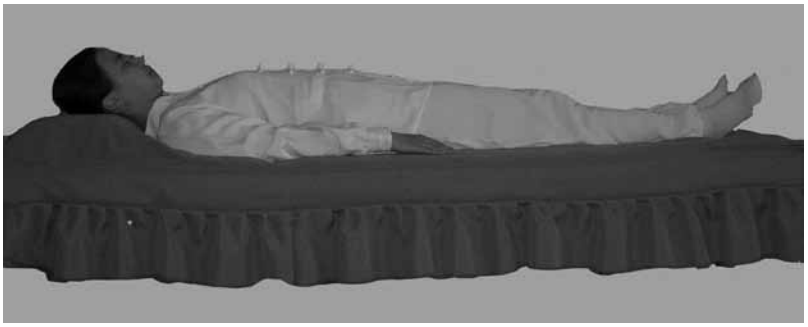

Figure 4.11 Supine position. Lie flat on your back in bed, the basic lying posture

Lateral Recumbent Position

Lie on either your right or left side. Laying on your right is more common. Retract your head slightly towards your chest, keeping eyes lightly closed. Place one leg on the other. Bend your knees naturally with the leg on the top bent slightly so that both feet are on the bed. Stretch the top arm naturally, with palm facing down on your hip. Bend the lower arm underneath your head with palm facing up. Hold your five fingers together gently and rest your hand near your ear (Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12 Lateral recumbent position. Lie on either your right side or left side

Another posture of the lying down form is to stretch the leg underneath naturally and raise and bend the upper leg to 90° before laying it on the bed. This way, one leg is placed in front of the other with the sole of the front leg against the knee of the back one. Extend the upper arm to the front with the

palm resting on the knee of the front leg. Bend the lower arm upward with the palm resting on the elbow of the arm above. This posture is also known as the three-connecting form (Figure 4.13).

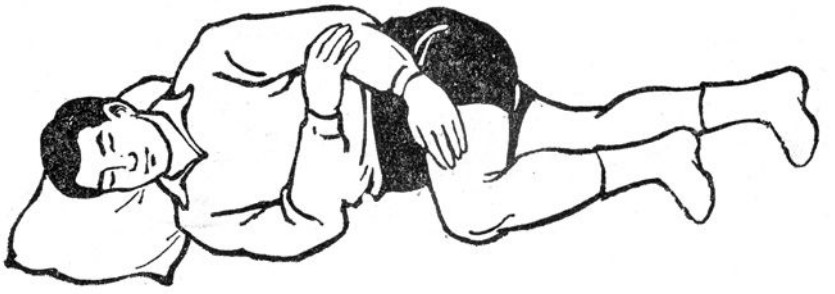

Figure 4.13 Three-connecting form is another posture of the lying form. Stretch the leg underneath naturally and raise and bend the upper leg to 90° before laying it on the bed

Semi-Reclining Position

On the basis of the supine position, raise your head and the upper body before leaning on the bed to form a semi-reclining posture. Stretch out your two legs naturally, or raise the lower leg by putting a cushion under the knees. This posture is intended for bedridden patients (Figure 4.14).

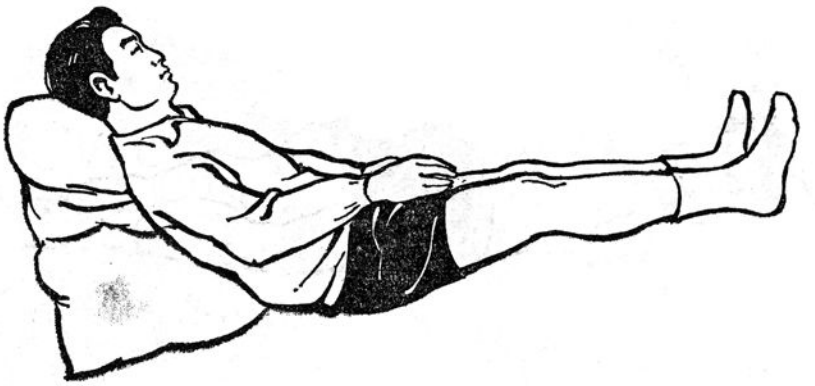

Figure 4.14 Semi-reclining, a semi-reclining posture, is intended for bedridden patients

4. Other Postures

In addition to the above common standing, sitting, and lying postures, Chapter 8 in this textbook also covers straight kneeling (Hu Gui, 互跪), squat sitting (Ju Zuo, 踞坐), and sitting with foot extended (Shen Jiao Zuo, 伸脚坐).

Straight Kneeling (Hu Gui, 互跪)

Stand with feet parallel to each other, body erect, and hands resting naturally at your side. After standing still for a moment, slowly bend the knees and kneel down on a bed mat or cushion. In the kneeling position, hold the feet parallel and "erect," that is, with the tip of the toes touching the ground and heels raised. Then bend the body forward or lean back, depending on the specified Qigong form being practiced.

Squat Sitting (Ju Zuo, 踞坐)

Sit in bed and rest hips and feet on the bed with knees bent upright and legs parallel to each other. Bend your upper body forward, with the hands holding the top of the lower leg.

Sitting with Foot Extended (Shen Jiao Zuo, 伸脚坐)

Sit on the bed with legs stretched next to each other. Keep the body erect and hands naturally at the sides, or place fists on your mid-thigh. Look straight ahead with your eyes and press your tongue against the upper palate. Relax your whole body.

B. Dynamic Movement Practices

Dynamic movement practices include pre-set styles of continuous and fixed movements and spontaneous movement styles.

1. Set Qigong Movement Practices

Most dynamic Qigong consists of fixed routine movements which are conducted sequentially in Qigong practice. As dynamic Qigong forms differ in movements, one needs to be familiar with the specific requirements of each form in practice. For instance, Tendon Changing Classic (Yi Jin Jing, 易筋经) has 12 forms, Wild Goose Qigong (Da Yan Gong, 大雁功) consists of 64 forms in each of the two sections, and the Five Elements Palm (Wu Xing Zhang, 五行掌) consists of five forms.

Routine dynamic Qigong can be divided according to different styles in performance. The conventional ones are listed below.

1. Pliable style, for example Taiji Boxing (Tai Ji Quan, 太极拳) and Eight Pieces of Brocade Qigong. The movements of this style are gentle, slow, and continuous.
2. Firm and strong style, for example Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic (Yi Jin Jing, 易筋经) and the Five-Element Palm (Wu Xing Zhang, 五行掌). The movements of this style are vigorous and forceful. Still contraction (contraction with the same length) is often applied for the purpose of achieving Qi sensations in this type of Qigong practice.
3. Massage style, for example Health Preserving Qigong (Bao Jian Gong, 保健功) and Relaxation Qigong (Fang Song Gong, 放松功). This style is characterized by directing Qi to the hands and then massaging and/or patting certain parts of the body.
4. Life-simulating Qigong style, for example Five-Animal Play (Wu Qin Xi, 五禽戏), Wild Goose Qigong, and Soaring Crane Qigong (He Xiang Zhuang, 鹤翔桩). All forms in this style are created by imitating an animal's movement.
5. Dancing type, for example some yoga forms and meditative dancing (Chan Ding Wu Dao, 禅定舞蹈). The movements of this style are derived from dancing, and are therefore elegant and beautiful.
6. Gymnastic style, for example the 18 forms of Qigong practice (Lian Gong Shi Ba Fa, 练功十八法). This style is characterized by stretching and flexible gymnastic movements.
7. Walking style, for example New Qigong Therapy (Xin Qigong Liao Fa, 新气功疗法), Taiji steps (Tai Ji Bu, 太极步), and Plum Blossom Stake (Mei Hua Zhuang, 梅花桩). This style is characterized by specific steps.

These styles may overlap as the distinctions are not clear-cut. One set of routine dynamic Qigong can include several styles. In Five Elements Palm Qigong, for example, the body movements are pliable, but the hands are still with static stretching force.

Note that there is a great difference in movements between general physical training and those of Qigong practice. General physical training is about muscle strength. Qigong training stresses movements induced by internal Qi and not stiff movements exerted by mechanical force. In dynamic Qigong practice, the muscles are soft and relaxed rather than stiff and tight, with the exception of the firm and strong Qigong style.

The force of dynamic Qigong comes from the force created by the mind. It can explode suddenly, which is unlike the force from continuous muscle contractions. The experience of stiffness, fatigue, aches, and numbness in the

muscles of the limbs after dynamic Qigong practice may indicate improper use of strength, rather than Qi.

2. Spontaneous Qigong Movement Practices

Spontaneous movements can either naturally occur during Qigong practice or be induced by "spontaneous dynamic Qigong," which is specifically intended to produce spontaneous movement.

The movements in spontaneous dynamic Qigong are caused by the flow of internal Qi rather than pre-set forms or mental guidance. A variety of movements may occur, ranging from slight movements to dramatic ones or from soft movements to vigorous ones. It is crucial that spontaneous movements should be maneuvered under the control of the mind, and that the rhythm, force, pause, and closing are to be directed by the mind as well. Otherwise, the practitioner is subject to Qigong deviation.

Spontaneous dynamic Qigong is, generally speaking, unsuitable for beginners since it is very hard to manage and liable to deviation.

II. Internal Adjustment

Internal Qigong adjustment enables you to adjust your sensitivity to internal feelings and balance their relationships. Although it is more subtle than the external and easily forgotten due to its lack of visible qualities, internal cultivation is essential to Qigong practice.

Internal and external maneuvers are closely linked with mutual influence. The practitioner must adjust the external movement by regulating the internal feelings of the limbs and by balancing the relationship between them.

The following is a brief introduction to the internal adjustment used in static Qigong, normally followed in sequence either from head to toe, or from toe to head, some of which are suitable for dynamic Qigong as well.

A. Head and Neck

Basic principles include keeping the head erect and neck relaxed, "withdrawing the sight and reversing hearing" (Shou Shi Fan Ting, 收视返听), and keeping the tongue pressed against the palate.

In some Qigong forms, keeping the head erect is referred to as "the head seems suspended" (Tou Ru Xuan, 头如悬) or "suspending the head" (Xuan Ding, 悬顶). Simply imagine that there is a thread pulling your head upward. This reduces pressure on the neck, helps relax the cervical vertebra, and facilitates smooth circulation of Qi for the governor vessel (Du Mai, 督脉).

While holding the head relatively erect, tilt it slightly forward by drawing the lower jaw slightly inward. If the head is rigidly erect, the cervical vertebras will be compressed. Tilting your head slightly forward allows the cervical vertebras to fully extend. Moreover, the maneuver of drawing the lower jaw back and tilting the head forward is closely related to the motion of drawing in your chest and straightening your back as discussed below.

"Withdrawing sight and reversing hearing" (Shou Shi Fan Ting, 收视返听) is a maneuver that reverses the attention of vision and hearing from outward to inward, resulting in looking without seeing and listening without hearing. Adjusting vision is very important to Qigong practice. *Canon of Yi Symbol* (*Yin Fu Jing*, 阴符经)[1] puts it as "The occult point lies in the eye." *Spiritual Pivot—On Perplexity* (*Lingshu—Dahuo Lun* 灵枢 • 大惑论)[2] states: "The eye is the messenger of the Heart, which houses the spirit." The eye is the occult point in Qigong practice. Only when the eyes are not distracted can the spirit be stored. "Withdrawing the sight" helps get rid of hallucinations. Blocking the impact of external light also helps practitioners concentrate on Qigong practice. The eyes should be closed lightly rather than tightly because complete closure may cause drowsiness due to darkness. Keeping your eyes fully open diverts your attention due to the abundance of light. Thus, a slight closure of eyes is required for still Qigong practice.

It is easy for the beginner to get drowsy and distracted. When this happens, open your eyes a bit to receive a glimmer of light and, from behind your eyelids, look straight ahead or slightly downward, at the tip of the nose. While this helps focus the mind, concentration has little to do with the opening or closure of the eyes. The exercise of focusing on the elixir field (Dantian), for example, is similar to reflecting on the elixir field. In general, the standing style requires looking slightly up or forward, while the sitting style requires looking slightly down or forward.

"Reversing hearing" is the practice of listening inwardly, represented by the form of listening to one's own breath—the so-called "breath-listening." As no sound is made by breathing in Qigong practice, breath-listening suggests the idea of listening to silence instead of any sound. Turning the sense of hearing back to oneself by listening to silence is a perfect state in Qigong practice according to the saying "silence is superior to any utterance."

Keep your mouth gently closed and your tongue in its natural place. Press the tongue against the palate. Also known as the tongue column (She Zhu, 舌柱), press your tongue (a gentle touch for beginners) naturally against the area between your teeth and palate, without force. This practice is basic for many Qigong forms, particularly Taoist Qigong, for connecting the conception (Ren Mai, 任脉) and governing vessels. When one has attained a certain level in Qigong practice, the pressure of the tongue against the palate will gradually

increase. Such a phenomenon appears naturally and the practitioner should not intentionally pursue it.

Some subtle adjusting, such as relaxing the brows and facial muscles during this practice, is beneficial both physically and emotionally. Smiling is the key in still Qigong. A smile helps induce a happy and relaxed emotional state, which manifests in body adjustment as relaxed brows with peace and joy. Note that smiling gives your face more of a sense of peace and joy than laughing, which tends to tighten the corners of your mouth.

B. Upper Limbs

Relaxing the shoulders and dropping the elbows are the key adjustments. When practicing shoulder relaxation, avoid shrugging. Allow your shoulders to relax to their natural position. This is necessary because tight shoulder muscles interfere with the flowing of Qi and hinder abdominal breathing. In the standing style, the shoulders are liable to shrug when lifting the arms, especially when raising your arms too high. Therefore, it is recommended that you hold your arms between the Danzhong point (膻中, CV-17) and the lower elixir in either the holding-ball or raising-ball form.

In order to relax the shoulders, the elbows must be relaxed as well, so as an extension of relaxing the shoulders, drop your elbows and exert no force. This should be easy to attain once your shoulder is properly relaxed. The elbow is considered a supporting and turning "point" for your shoulder and the arm. Make sure not to raise this "point" while practicing either the standing or sitting position.

When practicing standing, remember to "empty" your armpits, that is, leave a space between your arm and your body. A tightly held armpit blocks the circulation of Qi and blood. An empty armpit allows greater circulation of Qi and blood and brings more comfort.

C. Chest and Back

Drawing in your chest and straightening your back are the essential practices.

Drawing your chest slightly inwards relaxes the muscles on the triangular region of the chest, formed by the lines drawn between the Tiantu point (天突, DU-22) and the two nipples, giving you more relaxed breathing, and a better flow of Qi downward for abdominal breathing. Straightening your back also stretches the spine, allowing a smooth flow of Qi through the govenor vessel.

Drawing your lower jaw inward pulls in the chest. Chest, chin, and shoulder movements are directly related. In practicing Qigong, draw your chest slightly inward. As long as it is not pushed forward, draw your lower jaw inward and relax your shoulders.

Drawing in your chest and straightening your back must be done simultaneously, as the position of your chest, to a certain extent, determines the position of your back. Drawing in your chest excessively will result in a hunchback instead of a pulled back. The Chinese character "pulling" (拔) stresses the idea of being straight and upright and avoiding bending. The proper posture of your chest and back naturally reduces the physiological curvature of your back and waist, bringing about a more erect spinal column. This, along with drawing the lower jaw inward, reduces the physiological curvature of the neck as well. These Qigong practices give your spine the freedom to fully extend, allowing for a greater flow of Qi.

D. Waist and Hips

The basic principles are to extend your waist and lower your hips, and to draw in your abdomen and tilt your buttocks. These two practices are essential in both standing and sitting styles.

Extending your waist means stretching your spinal column to prevent the spinal column from lowering. Lowering your hips means to drop the hips by tilting them backward, contracting and tilting your perineum muscles in the sitting form as if you are about to sit on a high stool in the standing form.

The two postures not only help to extend the spine, but also enable the practitioner to rest the center of gravity on the lower abdomen, aiding Qi to gather in the elixir field.

E. Lower Limbs

Keeping your lower limbs relaxed and steady is one of the basic principles in Qigong practice. Stand straight in the standing form with feet as relaxed as possible and knees slightly bent and not past the tip of the toes. Keep feet shoulder-width apart with the toes slightly grasping the ground.

There are three positions: inward splayfoot, outward splayfoot, and parallel foot. For inward splayfoot, turn your toes inward to give you a firm footing. For outward splayfoot, turn your toes outward to give you flexible movements. The posture of standing with your feet parallel is also known as horse stance—a more natural posture than inward or outward splay feet.

When practicing the standing form, your lower limbs, and entire body, for that matter, should not be completely stiff and motionless. Allow your body to sway slightly, which can actually stabilize the standing posture rather than harm it. Standing with a slight sway will help save energy and keep your body relaxed. Generally, the lower limbs are more relaxed in the sitting form than in the standing form.

In the standing form, the feet postures are similar to those in the standing form in plain sitting. In the cross-legged and kneeling sitting forms, you may feel some pressure in your legs. Simply tap and massage your legs gently to help promote Qi and blood circulation.

2. Adjustment of Breath

Adjusting your breathing in the active process of respiration is also known as "Refining Qi" (Lian Qi, 炼气), breathing (Hu Xi, 呼吸), inhaling and exhaling (Tu-Na, 吐纳), etc.

The significance of the breath adjustment is that, by refining your breath, it cultivates and circulates internal Qi, which is the key to entering the Qigong state. Breathing directly correlates with internal Qi. Usually during Qigong exercise, routine breathing gradually decreases, while the activity of the internal Qi increases and strengthens. One inhalation and one exhalation comprise one breath cycle, in which exhalation correlates more closely with internal Qi. That is, the internal Qi is generated, cultivated, and circulated with exhalation. As a result, many Qigong forms pay more attention to exhalation, such as Nei Dan Shu, 内丹术 (a Qigong form of internal elixir). Modern researchers have also found and confirmed that regulating one's breathing in turn regulates the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system, and thus affects the function of corresponding internal organs.

There are two kinds of "breathing adjustment." The first is adjusting the breathing "type," for example adjusting natural breathing to gradually become fetal breathing (Tai Xi, 胎息) or abdominal breathing. The second is adjusting the air flow of inhalation and exhalation, and making the breathing stronger or softer, or thinner or longer. Both steps have the same goal—to attain tranquility. The two kinds of adjustment correlate and interact with each other. That is, the changes in the breathing types may alter the breath of each inhalation and exhalation, and vice versa.

I. Adjustment of Breathing Types

The breathing in Qigong exercises can be roughly divided into two categories: the commonly practiced breathing type and the special breathing type. The former is commonly used in most forms for directly entering the Qigong state, and the latter is only applied to certain Qigong forms for achieving specific goals, such as health preservation and therapeutic purposes.

A. Commonly Practiced Breathing Types

Commonly used breathing types include chest breathing, abdominal breathing, and fetal breathing. These three breathing types are commonly used in most forms of Qigong; they are also regarded as three mutually related stages in the process of transforming daily breathing to the Qigong state of breathing during static Qigong practice.

1. Chest Breathing (Natural Breathing)

Chest breathing is characterized by obvious movements of the chest. The chest expands upon inhalation and retracts upon exhalation. In general, the daily breathing of a standing person is chest breathing. Singers and athletes may develop abdominal breathing or a mixture of chest and abdominal breathing through their long-term training. Natural breathing in Qigong exercises increases your awareness of daily breathing. Being gentle in intent rather than forceful in will is the key to this process. However, as a beginner, it is difficult to perform this breathing type without any force, so just try to be gentle when applying your will. The force exerted, as the ancients said, is "neither astringent nor slippery" (不澀不滑), thus making the breathing in and out smooth and controlled. Chest breathing in Qigong practice is slower than daily natural breathing. According to respiratory physiologists, a normal person's respiratory rate is 16–20 times per minute, which can be reduced to 1–2 times per minute, or even to once every few minutes for static Qigong practitioners; although the respiratory rate is low, breathing does not cease, and there is no intentional pausing—only the time of inhalation and exhalation are prolonged.

After chest breathing becomes even, one can draw the Qi down and gradually move from chest breathing to abdominal breathing. This transformation cannot be done in one action, but should proceed in an orderly way. The general steps of descending are as follows: lower Qi to Danzhong (膻中, CV-17) in the epigastric region first; once the Qi sensation in this area becomes abundant and respiration is even and steady, lower the Qi to the navel and finally to the Dantian.

In the process of lowering Qi by these steps, chest breathing may transform into combined breathing of both the chest and abdomen, resulting in simultaneous up-and-down movement of the chest and abdomen.

2. Abdominal Breathing

Abdominal breathing is characterized by the rise and fall of the abdomen with breathing. Abdominal breathing can be further divided into two types: regular abdominal breathing and reverse abdominal breathing. In regular abdominal breathing, the abdomen expands during inhalation and retracts upon exhalation.

In reverse abdominal breathing, it is the opposite, in that the abdomen retracts while inhaling and expands when exhaling.

When talking about moving from chest breathing to abdominal breathing, people are generally referring to the regular abdominal breathing and not the reverse. In training, start with daily breathing and gradually direct the air down by intention, when breathing deeply increases the rise and fall of your abdomen. During inhalation, relax the abdominal muscles gently so the abdomen expands naturally. During exhalation, contract the abdominal muscles slightly and pull the abdomen in naturally. After a period of exercise, the rise and fall of the abdomen will increase gradually and naturally. Eventually, your abdomen will replace the chest in becoming the starting and ending point of your natural breathing. Regular abdominal breathing is then formed. What one needs to pay attention to is that no force should be exerted during practice.

Reverse abdominal breathing is more difficult than regular abdominal breathing. Hence, special training with an experienced instructor is often needed. Reverse abdominal breathing is required and emphasized in some Qigong forms because it has the advantage of impelling movement of the internal Qi. For example, reverse abdominal breathing is commonly used in the practice of the Small Heavenly Circulation Form (Xiao Zhou Tian, 小周天), in which the internal Qi is drawn up to the Baihui (百会) point when inhaling and descends to the lower elixir upon exhaling. At the beginning of training for reverse abdominal breathing, focus more on exhalation than on inhalation by drawing your internal Qi down and gathering it in your lower elixir during exhalation. Reverse abdominal breathing becomes natural only after a long time of training, when your abdomen inflates and expands upon exhalation and relaxes and contracts upon inhalation. Once you are familiar with reverse abdominal breathing, you can add "anus lifting." Retract the anus and vulva slightly while inhaling; relax the anus and vulva while exhaling. The combination of the reverse abdominal breathing and anus movement will further improve the movement of the internal Qi.

Whether training for regular or reverse abdominal breathing, avoid expanding your belly intentionally. The expanding and retracting of your abdomen should naturally follow inhalation and exhalation, and not be forced by will power. When inhaling deeply, your abdomen expands out naturally, and exhaling naturally occurs as your abdomen relaxes. Initially, in abdominal breathing, it may seem that your entire abdomen is breathing. Gradually, when your breath becomes deeper, longer, softer, and thinner, a relatively limited and definite "pivot" for breathing will form.

This pivot is the central point at which abdominal pressure gathers when it retracts. Therefore, breathe Qi in from this point when inhaling and breathe Qi out from this point when exhaling. This point is called the Dantian or

"elixir field," which one should be aware of during the practicing of Qigong. There are different opinions regarding the exact location and size of the elixir field. Based on your practice of regulating breathing, the location of the elixir varies accordingly. Generally speaking, the lower elixir field is located 3 cun below the navel (the cun comes from the body measurement method; the width of the widest place of the thumb is considered 1 cun on one's own body). This measurement is basically accurate for most people. However, some people believe that the Dantian is the navel. For them, Dantian is located 3 cun below the navel in the interior location while a person is in a lying or supine position. According to this point of view, elixir breathing is referred to as navel breathing, which is the first kind of fetal breathing (Tai Xi, 胎息).

In a strict sense, the formation of abdominal breathing and the definite breathing pivot indicate the formation of elixir breathing, which is the breathing type required by Qigong practice. Chest breathing is practiced for abdominal breathing, and abdominal breathing is practiced for elixir breathing. Moreover, the highest stage in static Qigong practice requires fetal breathing. Elixir breathing is the beginning of Tai Xi (fetal breathing).

3. Tai Xi (胎息)—Fetal Breathing

There are two interpretations for the term "fetal breathing":

1. According to the ancients, the breath comes in and goes out from the navel: "when you initially practice regulating your breathing, imagine your breath coming from the navel and terminating in your navel… just like the fetus in the uterus, so it is called fetal breathing." Ancient classics state that fetal breathing makes people regain their youthful vigor when they breathe, as a fetus breathes, through the navel. *Three Keys for Keeping Fit* (*She Sheng San Yao*, 摄生三要)[3] states: "Fetus does not breathe through the nose and mouth. An umbilical cord links the fetus to his/her mother's Ren vessel, which connects to the lungs; the lungs open to the nose. Therefore, when the mother exhales, the fetus does so and when the mother inhales, the fetus does too. The fetus breathes through the passage of umbilicus."
2. Fetal breathing is body breathing, or whole body breathing, as well as body hair breathing. *Fine Prescriptions of Su's and Shen's* or *Su Shen Liang Fang* (苏沈良方)[4] states: "The breath occurs spontaneously without in and out, or it feels like the clouds vaporizing and the fog dispersing through the thousands of pores." These two kinds of interpretation can be regarded as the two stages of fetal breathing. The former is the initial stage, and the latter is developed from the former. The latter is Tai Xi, namely body breathing, and is required for reaching a high Qigong

level. As the initial stage of Tai Xi, the navel breathing level is equivalent to Dantian breathing. Therefore, the elixir breathing introduced above is actually the initial stage of fetal breathing. The higher stage of fetal breathing, namely body breathing, is as described below.

The most significant aspect of body breathing, or sweat-pores breathing, which differs from chest and abdominal breathing, is that the nose and mouth are no longer perceived as the actual passage of respiration. Although the breathing pivot changes during chest breathing and abdominal breathing, as well as in elixir breathing, they all require the nose and mouth as their respiratory passage: either inhaling and exhaling through the nose or the mouth, or both of them; or inhaling through the nose but exhaling through the mouth. When you initially practice body breathing, while the lower elixir remains the respiratory pivot, the Qi goes to and leaves the elixir directly through the pores of the entire body, not just the mouth and nose. In body breathing, one perceives that, with each breath, sweat pores open and close as the sensation of breathing through the mouth and nose diminishes to a minimum.

The transformation from navel or elixir breathing to body breathing must be conducted in an orderly way. The key to this process is to constantly strengthen the Qi sensations in the Dantian, which will generate two results. The first is that along with the enrichment of Qi sensation in the elixir, internal Qi will spread out all over the body and make the Qi sensation in the whole body so strong that it will flow out of the body and be unified with the Qi of the universe. On the other hand, breathing through the mouth and nose gets weaker and weaker and gradually seems to have stopped completely or barely exist. As breathing through the mouth and nose decreases, breathing through the sweat pores gradually increases. Thus the exchanges of Qi with the surrounding environment through the pores occur.

B. Special Breathing Types

There are dozens of special breathing types in Qigong practice. A few are introduced here.

1. Pause Breathing

Pause breathing is a breathing type in which a pause exists between inhalation and exhalation after each respiratory cycle, such as inhaling-pause-exhaling, exhaling-pause-inhaling, inhaling-pause-inhaling-exhaling, etc. The pauses in this breathing type have the effect of maintaining, confirming, and extending the inhalation or the exhalation, and therefore create a state of rest. The pause after the exhalation strengthens exhalation, and the pause after inhalation enhances inhalation.

2. Anus-Lifting Breathing

Anus-lifting breathing refers to the respiratory method that contracts the muscle of the perineum consciously while inhaling and relaxes the perineum while exhaling. Generally speaking, when one practices Xiao Zhou Tian (小周天, Small Heavenly Circulation Form), anus-lifting breathing is mandatory to coordinate the Qi. This breathing type is also adapted while practicing other Qigong forms at a selected time. Anus-lifting breathing is applied to treat diseases due to the sinking of Zhong Qi (中气, central Qi, Qi of spleen and stomach), disorders such as prolapses of internal organs, prolapse of rectum, hemorrhoids, etc. Treatment results may be enhanced by combining this with reverse abdominal breathing.

3. Sound-Pronouncing Breathing

Sound-pronouncing breathing is a breathing type in which one sounds with inhalation or exhalation. In general, pronouncing syllables while exhaling reduces the "excess." Pronouncing sounds while inhaling nourishes the "deficiency." There are different methods of sound-pronouncing breathing. Some require an echo sound and some require the mouth shape to match with the sound; each one has its own treatment purpose and mechanism.

II. Adjustment of Breathing Air

Adjusting the breathing air is more subtle compared to adjusting the breathing types. Gentle, smooth, and natural conduction without force is required to avoid an uncomfortable feeling.

A. Types of Air Breathing

The ancients believed that there were four types of breathing air practices in Qigong. As *Contemplating Breath Sutra* or *Anban Shouyi Jing* (安般守意经)[5] states:

> Breathing air includes four types. The first is Wind breathing, the second Pant breathing, the third is Air breathing, and the fourth is Rest breathing. Wind breathing has a respiratory sound and Air breathing is without sound. Rest breathing has no obstacle between inhaling and exhaling, and Pant breathing is as if exhalation is obstructed.

Primary Shamatha and Vipasyana or *Tong Meng Zhi Guan* (童蒙止观)[6] further explains:

> What is Wind breathing? When the respiratory sound through the nose is audible in the sitting position, it is called Wind breathing. What is

> Pant breathing? When there are no respiratory sounds through the nose in the sitting position. Pant breathing is when respiration is obstructed. What is Air breathing? When there is neither obstruction nor sounds in the air passage, however, the respiration is not thin or long enough, it is called Air breathing. What is Rest breathing? It is respiration without any obstruction and sound, which is so long, gentle and thin that breathing seems to nearly stop. It is also peaceful as if inhalation and exhalation are one.

Air breathing is common in natural respiration and is characterized by no sounds in the air passage and a very short pause between inhaling and exhaling. For wind breathing, there is an increase in the volume of air breathed. The voice in the air passage sounds like blowing wind passing through a small gap; therefore it is called wind breathing. Pant breathing is the practice of breathing by raising the shoulders, opening the mouth, and breathing forcefully. As an example, this type of breathing is used in certain Martial Arts Qigong before the person emits force. Rest breathing can be described as deep, long, gentle, thin, uninterrupted, and eternal respiration. Uninterrupted respiration means there is no obvious pause showing between inhaling and exhaling, just as there is no sound when a master changes the directions of the bow on a violin string. When examining this kind of breathing, the ancients put a feather in front of the nostrils, taking "the motionlessness of the feather" as a standard criterion. There is no interval between every breath, and the duration of each inhalation and exhalation is greatly lengthened.

B. The Function of Air Breathing

Each of the four types of breathing has its own advantages in Qigong practice. It is hard to tell which is on the higher level. In Medical Qigong forms, resting breathing is usually adopted and pant breathing is rarely used.

The daily type of breathing usually varies between wind breathing and air breathing, and is most often air breathing. Slow air breathing is mostly used during Qigong practice. Wind breathing is required in some Qigong forms, such as New Qigong Therapy. Rest breathing is required, and the other three types of breathing generally should be avoided in the practice of static Qigong because "Wind breathing scatters Qi; Pant breathing blocks Qi; Air breathing exhausts Qi; Rest breathing calms Qi." Only through rest breathing—breathing that is so relaxed, slow, and effortless that it seems to have stopped—can one enter the higher level of the Qigong state.

In order to adjust the daily breathing type to rest breathing, a training process is needed. In this process, "neither forgetting nor aiding" (勿忘勿助) is the principle. One must actively regulate the respiration to make it deep,

long, gentle, and thin but uninterrupted. Meanwhile, avoid holding the breath intentionally with forced exertion. Many discomforts during Qigong exercises, such as stuffiness in the chest, dizziness, fatigue, and so on, are usually related to improper regulation of breaths.

After you establish your breathing habit, the respiration is controlled subconsciously rather than consciously. At this time, awareness and intention become less important, and just follows the breathing. Some books define breathing controlled by consciousness as adjusting breathing (調息) and the breathing not controlled by consciousness as rest breathing (息調).

3. Adjustment of Mind

Mind adjustment, also known as refining spirit (Lian Shen, 炼神) or self-training (Lian Ji, 炼己), is the process of directing your thoughts or mind. This changes the manner and content of everyday thinking for the purpose of entering the Qigong state.

The mental activities of ordinary people in everyday life are usually scattered outward; however, in Qigong practice, the mind should be turned inward. By directing your thoughts to a new direction, an alternated manner of thinking with new contents ensues. Under the guidance of the mind, which is the leading element of the three adjustments, body and breath adjustment can be coordinated until one reaches a Qigong state, that is, the three adjustments become integrated into one.

Mind adjustment includes directing your mind and your state. Directing your mind is intentional and induced. Directing your state is unintentional and concomitant. The relationship of directing your mind and directing your state is as follows: a higher state of mind contributes to easier access to the Qigong state, while a higher Qi state facilitates the generation of the corresponding mind.

I. Operation of Mind Adjustment (Yi Nian Tiao Kong, 意念调控)

Mind adjustment refers to the practice of inducing or avoiding specific ideas in Qigong practice, with the most common methods being "keep the mind on," mind-reach, and entering tranquil meditation.

A. "Keep the Mind On" (Yi Shou, 意守)

Yi Shou, translated as "keep the mind on" (also translated as "keep the awareness at" or "focusing the mind on"), is the common practice of dispatching the mind or awareness subjectively at a target. To dispatch means to put into a different place, namely to change the focus of the mind from oneself naturally to the target for concentration. This is as the ancients say "putting the mind there gently."

The subject the mind should be on or concentrated on falls into two categories: something on the body and something outside of the body. The former can be focusing on certain body parts, for example elixir field (Dantian) or Baihui (百会, GV-20), or certain behaviors, for example respiration or feeling Qi flow. The latter usually focuses on scenery such as a distant mountain or a pine tree.

The purpose of "keep the mind on" is to rule out stray thoughts and eliminate distractions by replacing miscellaneous thoughts with only one thought and to induce perception. Replacing miscellaneous thoughts with just one thought can help settle emotions, eliminate illusions, and stabilize the mind.

Perceptions induce correlated experience of sensation as a result of the location and characteristics of the subject initially focused on, which can directly exert an influence on Qi flow.

According to Qigong theory, Qi follows the mind. For example, focusing on the lower elixir field directs the Qi to the lower elixir field, while concentrating at Baihui directs the Qi to the Baihui. Keeping your mind on a distant mountain broadens your vision. Easing your mind soothes your Qi flow, while concentrating on a pine tree lowers Qi and induces a reflective state. These focal points, depending on their parts and special characteristics, can cause physical and mental effects, which can in turn transform the process of the "mind focusing" from a pure mind maneuver to one that involves both body and mind. That is how "keep the mind on" influences and regulates the mind and body.

According to the nature of mastering your thoughts, "keep the mind on" is fundamentally different from "paying attention" in psychology. "Paying attention" is concerned with the direction and focus of mental activities. Its direction reflects the specific target, scope, and degree of the responsive mind. As a mental activity to reflect phenomena, "paying attention" selectively focuses on certain phenomena for the purpose of gaining a distinct and profound cognition. In comparison, "keep the mind on" requires neither direction nor focus, since it is intended not to reflect any phenomenon but to change the state of the mind. It is, therefore, the state of the mind itself. Focusing on the elixir,

for example, is aimed to free the mind from the brain to the elixir, instead of getting to know the nature of the elixir.

In Qigong practice, "keep the mind on" is intended not to obtain cognitive knowledge about the focal point of your intention, but to rest the mind on your focal point gently by means of "seemingly kept on but not focusing" (似守非守). Since the purpose of "keep the mind on" is not to know the nature of the focal point, it takes advantage of the singularity and perceptual features of the focal point for concentration to rule out wandering thoughts and inducing perceptions. Thus, keeping the mind on the elixir field is not to know the nature of the elixir field but to rule out stray thoughts and induce a Qi perception of the elixir field. In conclusion, attention is featured by objectiveness, while "keep the mind on" is by subjectivity.

At the beginning of the operation of "keep the mind on," however, one needs to be guided by attention to help locate the point of focus, to keep and guide the mind. Once the job is done, attention is supposed to recede and let the mind remain there naturally. While learning Qigong, one needs to distinguish the discrepancy and association between "keep the mind on" and "paying attention." Failing to do so explains the slow progress of many practitioners who pay attention rather than keeping the mind on something. As a result, the mind falls into the error of clinging to the substantiality of the point of focus, and thus the supposed sensational experience cannot be induced.

B. Mental Visualization (Cun Xiang, 存想)

Mental visualization is the process of keeping the mind on specific scenery or an imaginary object so that it can visualize it vividly, also known as observing imagination (观想).

The specific scenery or the imaginary object for mental visualization is usually what practitioners are familiar with: a situation, phenomenon, or image they worship. Since such scenery or objects are beyond the limits of reality, they can be things that have never existed in the world, such as legendary figures or situations. Therefore, the scope of the focal point for mental visualization is wider than that for "keep the mind on," which can virtually be anything imaginable. Medical Qigong recorded in *General Treatise on Etiology and Symptomology of Various Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun* (诸病源候论)[7] introduced the method of Contemplating the Color of the Five Internal Organs (存想五脏光色) to treat diseases. Mental visualization tools can be used to increase strength, such as pushing mountain (Tuishan, 推山), holding the gate of heaven (Tuo Tianmen, 托天门), and pulling nine cattle (La Jiuniu, 拉九牛) in Martial Arts Qigong. The imagining of caressing the ball, pressing Qi (按气), dredging Qi (贯气), expelling diseased Qi, Qi hot as fire, Qi cold as ice, Qi

piercing as a sword, Qi softening like cotton, etc. in everyday Qigong practice all belong to the category of mental visualization.

Attention should be on the difference between mental visualization and imagination in daily life. The image from imagination is not very clear—mostly it is an image from the memory. The imaginary object required in mental visualization is concrete, with real sensation and perception. The difference between these two can be described as the same difference that occurs between "thinking of your mother" and "seeing your mother in your dream"; the image of your mother is clearer and more vivid in your dream than the one when you are thinking of her. Imagining an object belongs to an ideal thinking pattern, and mentally visualizing an object belongs to perceptual thinking patterns in the psychology of thinking. Therefore, adjustment of the mind can make a change in the thinking pattern, which is one of the contents and forms of mental activities.

The purpose of mental visualization is similar to "keep the mind on," that is, ruling out stray thoughts and inducing perceptions (感受). Ruling out stray thoughts focuses more on attaining perceptions. Without the confinement of reality, the design and choice of point of focus for mental visualization can take the need to induce specific perceptions into account. Therefore, mental visualization is more perception-oriented and can induce stronger sensations.

The mechanism of mental visualization is similar to that of "keep the mind on" in its capacity to influence and adjust the body and mind; the only difference is that mental visualization is more powerful to induce perceptions. Moreover, if the point of focus for mental visualization is what the practitioner feels good about, he/she will be less critical and more acceptable to it. Directing your thoughts in this way can accelerate the process and intensify the strength of the perception induced, so that the necessary mental realm is easier to reach.

It should be noted that mental visualization stresses the importance of perceptual thinking and that its imagined target is not merely an image but a target-image, which is supposed to be as real as dreams. For more details, please refer to the "Psychological Effects of Qigong" (气功的心理效用) section in Chapter 3.

C. Entering Tranquility (Ru Jing, 入靜)

Entering tranquility is the process of eliminating all cognitive thoughts.

Eliminating all thoughts does not equal eliminating all mental activities because mental activities include not only cognitive thoughts. The Qigong state of void and nothingness achieved by tranquil meditation is a blank state of mind without cognitive thoughts. Absence of cognitive thoughts is, however, not absence of the mind. Although there are no images, there is still consciousness.

Images and thoughts can be created any time by the mind. The blank mental realm is nonetheless full of vigor and vitality. In ancient Qigong literature, the state of tranquility is not "dull nothingness" (顽空) or "deadly still" (死寂), but "lively still" (如如不动) and "quiet as a mirror" (寂而常照). Here, the words "lively" and "mirror" are used to describe the vitality and energy that can be aroused any time.

Since cognitive thoughts are dependent on imagery, eliminating thoughts, therefore, involves eliminating all imagery in the mind. As it is difficult for beginners to rule out all images, the practice of entering tranquil meditation should begin with "keep the mind on," which focuses on replacing thousands of thoughts with only one thought rather than emphasizing inducing perceptions. When a single image has been formed and stabilized, it is much easier to rule out this one image to enter the tranquil state.

Different from "keep the mind on" and mental visualization, entering the state of tranquility is a progressive process of eliminating thoughts, during which your mind's maneuvers will become increasingly weaker. If a tranquil mind has to be maintained by intentional maneuvers, there must be something wrong.

The success of entering the state of tranquility is closely related to emotional activities. An agitated emotion is often accompanied by miscellaneous images resulting from wandering thoughts that are very hard to eliminate. In such cases, tranquility cannot be obtained without settling the emotions. As emotional activities gradually lessen, the mind will be calmed and become peaceful. When a stage of true peace has been reached, the tranquil state will ensue.

The mechanism of entering the state of tranquility in its capacity to affect and adjust the body and mind differs from that of "keep the mind on" and mental visualization. Instead of inducing perceptions by using specific images, it is meant to return the body and mind to the most natural state by ruling out any direct or potential psychological and physiological influence resulting from various images and mental activities. Once this is achieved, discomforts and uneasiness of the body and mind will be relieved. Consequently, the process of practicing to enter tranquility is the same as the process of eliminating unfavorable influences from the body and mind. Practiced properly, it can be of great benefit to the practitioner's mental and physical health.

II. Adjustment of the Mental Realm (Jing Jie Tiao Kong, 境界调控)

"Adjusting" your mental realm involves the process of aligning your whole consciousness or mental realm during practice, which occurs naturally most of the time, rather than intentionally induced.

Whichever technique ("keep the mind on," mental visualization, or entering tranquility) you use for your mind adjustment during Qigong practice, the gradual deepening of mental realms manifests into different stages and levels. This evolution differs according to the purposes and methods of different mind practices. The mental realm of relaxation and tranquility is highly desirable in Medical Qigong. The following is the evolution of the stages of mental realms in entering tranquility with a briefing to "keep the mind on" and mental visualization.

A. Mental Realm of Entering Tranquility (入静的意识境界)

The mental realm of entering tranquility can be divided into different stages or levels by different standards and needs. The following division of the four stages is based on the characteristics of subjective experiences in the process of entering tranquil meditation.

1. Relaxation and Tranquility Stage (松静阶段)

As in the initial stage of tranquil meditation, relaxation and tranquility are aimed at relaxing the body and quieting the mind. It is, however, no easy job to become truly relaxed and tranquil. Relaxing the limbs and trunk is easier but less important than relaxing the viscera. Relaxation of some parts of the body, such as that of the eyebrows and eyes, tends to be ignored. The relaxation of the mind goes even deeper. The key to achieving this stage is to be void of intentional thoughts. If there are still some stray thoughts, they should at least be unintentionally initiated. Thus, the real relaxation is a total relaxation of the body and mind, the internal and external, to finally enter the state of tranquility.

Relaxation and tranquility are closely related and complementary to each other. Only when the body and the muscles are relaxed can tranquility of the mind be easily achieved. The more the body and the muscles are relaxed, the more the mind is tranquil and vice versa. The ultimate relaxation is eternal tranquility. This real relaxation and tranquility then leads into a quiet and comfortable state.

2. *Pulsations and Senses Stage* (动触阶段)

This stage is reached on the basis of relaxation and tranquility, the manifestation of which can be briefly descibed as "16 pulsations and senses": pain, itching, coolness, warmth, lightness, heaviness, astringency, slipperiness, rocking, stretching, coldness, hotness, floating, sinking, hardening, and softening. The point is that the body has more senses and only 16 of them are mentioned here. These feelings are mostly the sensations of skin and organs, and sometimes the whole body senses as well.

Practitioners may experience one or several of them, or even over 16 touches. A typical outbreak of these senses starts from a local region and gradually spreads to the entire body, and the feelings are intensified little by little to the maximum and then gradually diminish and finally disappear.

At the late stage of pulsations and senses, the sensations of the entire body tend to disappear. The practitioner will feel greatly relieved, spry and light with the Qi and blood smooth, and the body and mind refreshed. Some patients may recover at this stage because their physical and mental health has achieved a new level.

3. *Joy and Pleasure Stage* (快感阶段)

Continued from the stage of pulsations and senses, the joy and pleasure stage is often evident but short. The pleasant sensation obtained during it can hardly be described with words, since it is not the specific sensations experienced in everyday life but one that seems to include them all. Such joyful and pleasurable sensation is physical and mental, strong and serene, and profound and penetrating, as if coming from every cell and pore. Enveloped in these sensations, the body and mind become tranquil and permeated with infinite contentment and happiness.

This stage marks a significant advance in Qigong practice.

4. *Void and Nothingness Stage* (虚无阶段)

At this stage, what the body and mind are after is not satisfaction of senses or emotions but the loss of self into the eternity of the universe, which is the state of "the universe and human become oneness" as described by ancient people. Once self-consciousness vanishes, your state broadens suddenly, changing from finite to infinite, instant to eternal. By this time, the mind has become barely distinguishable from what it perceives. On the one hand, the mind seems to be both itself and the perceived and, on the other, what is perceived is both itself and the consciousness. Thus a chaotic state represented by void and nothingness is reached, where it is full of infinite vitality and vigor for the purification and creation of everything.

Regarding the division of the four states when entering tranquility, two points need to be addressed. First, the division is relative not only in the order but in the contents of the four stages as well. Generally speaking, the natural process of entering tranquility in Qigong practice follows the sequence of "relaxation and tranquility," "pulsations and senses," "joy and pleasure," and "void and nothingness." It is, however, also possible to have this sequence altered or merged. Second, the timing of each state for the individual practitioner varies, depending on the difference in his/her physical or mental state. The gifted ones may enter higher levels at the beginning, while those who are weak in body condition or use inappropriate methods may spend a long time without entering the state of "joy and pleasure" or "void and nothingness." When one knows about the relativity of the division and individual difference, it will help one better understand the principle and obtain the desired results from Qigong practice.

B. Mental Realm of "Keep the Mind On" and Mental Visualization

The mental realm of "keep the mind on" and mental visualization can evolve into two directions. One is the preparatory practice to enter tranquility by replacing miscellaneous thoughts with one thought and then obscuring what you are perceiving for "keep the mind on" and mental visualization. The second is intensifying your focus, instead of obscuring it, to induce specific psychological and physiological effects, such as "mental conjuring" in stake standing and "mental conjuring the master" in Tibetan Esoteric Qigong.

The second direction can be further divided into four phases that can be described by using the holding-ball type in stake standing as an example. The first phase is establishing an image (Qu Xiang, 取象), which involves establishing in the mind a clear image of the target for concentration or mental visualization. In the case of stake standing, imagine holding a very thin paper ball, which will break if too much force is exerted and will float away if too little force is exerted. The force should be neither too strong nor too little for the purpose of inducing the ball-holding perceptions.

The second phase is purifying the image (Jing Xiang, 净象), which involves simplifying and purifying the image of holding the ball established in the mind. In the case of holding the ball, eliminate the impurity on the ball, as in erasing the stained points on the paper. As the ball becomes purified, so will the mind.

The third phase is changing the image (Bian Xiang, 变象), which involves breathing new life into the image. For example, enlarge or deflate the ball without changing the clarity and purity or alter the physical property of the ball, such as turning the paper ball into a wood or iron ball. New perceptions

ensue from such alteration of the mind: holding an iron ball takes more effort than a wood ball.

The fourth phase is applying the image (Yong Xiang, 用象), which involves using the image to deal with problems. For instance, having attained a feeling of holding an iron ball indicates the increase of strength. By this time, the force of the fist will be stronger than that at the time of holding a paper ball.

As the evolution of such a mental realm is seldom used in Medical Qigong, details are limited.

4. Integrating Three Adjustments into One

The three adjustments (adjustment of the body, adjustment of the breathing, and adjustment of the mind) are the basic operations in learning and practicing Qigong; the integration of the three adjustments into one constitutes the Qigong state. Ancient people attached great importance to the integration of three adjustments into one; the state of the integration of the three adjustments into one and the methods of going into this state were introduced in many Qigong books. For example, *Tong Meng Zhi Guan* (童蒙止观), by the monk Zhi Yi in the Sui dynasty, says: "…the third is to adjust the body, the fourth is to adjust the breathing, and the fifth is to adjust the mind. The three adjustments should be used together… The sequence of the three adjustments depends on the practitioner; adjust anyone who needs to be adjusted. The body, the breathing and the mind all need to be adjusted during sitting meditation and the three adjustments should be proper and harmonized into oneness." Taoist Qigong practice also focuses on integrating the three adjustments into one; practices such as internal elixir Qigong stress the internal elixir produced when the spirit and Qi are gathered in the lower Dantian, which is integrating the three adjustments into one. The spirit is the mind, the Qi is breathing, and the Dantian is the body; they merge into one. The feeling of the state of integrating the three adjustments into one is close to the description in *Mirror of Refining the Elixir* (入药镜) by Cui Xi Fan in the Tang dynasty: "into the state is similar as you are drunk." Therefore, two basic methods will be presented regarding how to advance from learning the three adjustments separately to integrating the three adjustments into one in Qigong practice.

I. Consolidating Method

The consolidating method involves practicing each of the three adjustments skillfully before gradually integrating them into one. This includes the following phases.

A. Three Adjustments Being Separated

Whatever Qigong form the practitioner is learning, the three adjustments can in no circumstances be excluded. As stated previously, all Qigong forms consist of the three adjustments; the differences between them lie only in the arrangement of the three elements and the dominant skill. At the beginning, it is suggested that the practitioner learns them separately and practices each one over and over if he/she has a problem doing all three simultaneously. This step is the so-called "three adjustments being separated." The learning process usually follows the order of learning the body adjustment first, followed by breath adjustment, and finally mind adjustment. In other words, first learn body posture and body movement well, then learn regulation of your respiration, and finally, endeavor to achieve a Qi mental realm. This sequence is the process of training from the exterior to the interior, from the superficial to the deep, in accordance with the natural law of practice. Different forms require a differing focus of the application of the three adjustments. For example, some put more stress on posture while others focus on respiration or the mind. Hence, the time and effort allotted to the practice of each of the three differ accordingly.

Maneuvers involving the three adjustments are rather complex and hard to grasp. During the initial stages, it is necessary to practice the three adjustments separately in order to master the basics and lay a solid foundation for future advancement. Failure to take note of the discrepancies among them or insufficient attention to the practice of individual elements often results in less than desirable effects.

B. Three Adjustments Being Coordinated

The step following acquiring proficiency in the three adjustments being separated is coordinating the three to complete the maneuver.

At this stage, the practitioner may not be able to handle the three adjustments at one time. It is often the case that attending to body movement leads to loss of breath adjustment and vice versa, not to mention the mind and state. Thus, one has to first coordinate the mind with respiration and movement and then establish an organic association among the three in order for them to promote, restrain, and correspond to each other. Once the correspondence between the three adjustments has become natural, the coordination and synchronization

of the three adjustments can be promoted to render them rhythmic and coordinated.

The formation of the rhythmic alignment of the three adjustments is the symbol of their coordination, which indicates the association among them has been stabilized and needs no intentional direction any more. It is the three adjustments being coordinated in a process proceeding gradually and continuously from the three links of separating, corresponding, and rhythm forming.

In general, the three adjustments being coordinated is the same as the three adjustments being separated. However, some tiny fragment maneuvers start to merge into units in this phase. Therefore, the three adjustments being coordinated is the quantity-changing phase in the process of the three adjustments integrating into one.

C. Three Adjustments Integrated into One

In nature, the three adjustments have never been really separated, and none can exist by itself alone in Qigong practice. Mind, breath, and body adjustment are three aspects and angles of Qigong maneuvers, each being closely related to the other two.

The relation between mind and breath adjustment is quite obvious. On the one hand, it is hard to imagine a panting person being as calm as still water, and on the other hand, a quiet mental realm is necessary for regular, mild breathing. Mind adjustment and breath adjustment are synchronized, simultaneously and inseparably.

Mind adjustment is also related to body adjustment. The latter exerts influence on the former: a static state or moderate and rhythmic body movement contributes to mental unity and emotional calmness, while violent movements are often accompanied by tension. That explains the requirements of "embodying tranquility in motion" in dynamic Qigong practice. Mind adjustment influences body adjustment too. If the mind is totally stabilized, there will not be any body movements since they are barely possible without the involvement of either consciousness or subconsciousness.

Breath adjustment and body adjustment are on even more intimate terms. The relationship between the frequency, methods of respiration, and exercise intensity has been illustrated in physiology. Intense exercises are inevitably accompanied by rapid respiration, while slow respiration can lead to body relaxation and the slowing down of body movements.

With the advance in coordination of the three adjustments, the boundary between the three adjustments will become more obscure and the association and identification of them will be more distinct. The organic association will

eventually take the place of intentional maneuvers to become the leading force in attaining a Qigong state. By this time, the integration of the three adjustments will be obtained naturally, where intentional alignment of the body has completely ceased. The state in either dynamic or still Qigong is maintained by the natural association of the three, and the practice goes on naturally with no contrived endeavor.

II. Extending Method

The extending method involves extending one adjustment to the extreme to induce the state of the three adjustments integrated into one.

Since the three adjustments are closely associated and identical, the state of the three adjustments integrated into one can be reached by practicing any one of them to the extreme to induce the required state of the other two. In so doing, the Qigong state of one adjustment includes three, and the three adjustments integrated into one will be reached.

The fundamental association and identity among the three adjustments indicates the common starting point and ultimate destination they share. To practice one of them to the extreme is to manipulate it from the starting point to the ultimate, which means reaching the same starting point and ultimate destination, that is, the three adjustments integrated into one.

Although any one of the three adjustments can be chosen to practice to its extreme and thus inducing the state of the three adjustments integrated into one, ancient Chinese people highly recommended starting from the breath adjustment. This makes sense because breath adjustment stands in between mind and body adjustment, and therefore functions as a bridge to connect the other two. Extending breath adjustment to a Qigong state is easier to attain. For example, while practicing still Qigong, the lower elixir can be taken as the breathing pivot in breath adjustment to attain fetal breathing. During the practice, the other parts of the body seem to disappear and one feels as if the boundary between the body and the environment has blurred. There is only the elixir existing in the mind which opens and closes lightly in tune with the respiration. Everything else becomes distant. With the development of fetal breathing, elixir in the mind also disappears; the breathing in and out of the body through all the pores is the only sensation—the body and environment become a whole. Furthermore, the body, mind, and breathing blend together without a distinction between them. This is the Qigong state of the three adjustments integrated into one.

III. Characteristics of the State Integrating Three Adjustments into One

First, though the three adjustments still exist, they have all lost their own traces and have merged into one unified state, where each alignment is hardly distinguishable from the other two and any tiny change will cause the change of the whole state. It is the so-called "pulling one hair moves the whole body."

Second, this state is hierarchical. For example, when one initially attains the integration of the three adjustments, he/she is perfectly aware of the integration, knowing that he/she is at the state. Such awareness is an indication that the real "oneness" is still some steps away because the boundary between object and subject is somehow distinguishable in the mind. With more practice and learning, this awareness or "knowing" will also be merged into the integration of the three adjustments to become one of the attributes. By then, the state of real oneness will be formed. The former level is termed "body and mind integrated into one"; while the latter is termed "heaven and men integrated into one."

As stated previously, the state of the three adjustments integrated into one can only be reached naturally rather than intentionally by will power. At the advanced level, the state is autonomic and able to develop and optimize itself without intervention or instructions from the mind. This process is somewhat like a child who becomes independent of his/her parents as he/she is growing up. Once the mature state is reached, it is able to develop naturally and freely.

Thus, it can be seen that the state of the three adjustments integrated into one usually undergoes the evolution from intentional direction to natural development, from the inevitable to the free. It is not fixed, but is always advancing and full of vitality.

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CHAPTER 5

General Introduction to Qigong Forms

Medical Qigong forms constitute the core and basic content of Qigong study in Chinese medicine and are essential for scientific research, the researches of potential clinical applications, and classical Qigong documentation. To better study and practice Medical Qigong forms, it is necessary to have some general knowledge of the Qigong forms. This includes classification, guidelines, precautions, practical effects, and applications for the prevention and treatment of disease.

1. Classification of Qigong Forms

Qigong has a long history, has multi-academic subjects, and is widespread throughout China. There are a large number and many different types of ancient Qigong forms mostly within Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Medical Qigong, and Martial Arts Qigong. When ancient forms combine with the contemporary forms, the number and types of Qigong forms are numerous.

Below, we categorize Qigong forms for a more in-depth understanding of their origin, characteristics, and applications. In doing this, we hope to aid the next generation in preserving and enhancing this cultural heritage.

I. Classification of Qigong by Academic Schools or Traditions

Qigong has been divided into various schools or traditions based on its goals, forms, theoretical basis, and heritage tree. The major representative traditions are presented below.

A. Buddhist Qigong Tradition

Buddhist Qigong[i] lays stress on the methods and skills of Buddhist Cultivation Meditation (禅定), and focusing and reflecting (止观), but not on the philosophy of Buddhism.

Buddhist Qigong practice emphasizes discipline, meditation, and wisdom. "Discipline" refers to mitzvah and moral restraining, that is, the practice of aligning your mind and actions with clear intention. This concept is very useful in attaining the health effects of Qigong practice. "Meditation" is practicing Buddhist Cultivation Meditation including two aspects: "focusing" (止) and "reflecting" (观). Focusing involves reducing mental activities and replacing miscellaneous thoughts with only one thought to render the mind still and clear as a mirror. Reflecting is looking deep into your soul without arousing other mental activities in order to purify the mind and free the spirit. "Wisdom" is learning to obtain wisdom. It is the process of the acquisition of "selflessness" and then real freedom, based on a purified mind and a free spirit.

In this aspect of Qigong practice, Buddhists practice with the body and the mind through discipline, meditation, and wisdom to reach the highest level of self-cultivation.

B. Daoist Qigong Tradition

Daoist Qigong mainly indicates the practice methods and skills of becoming an immortal Daoist, not including its philosophical sect. Daoist Qigong is represented by the art of internal elixir, or nowadays called Heavenly Circulation Qigong (Zou Tian Gong, 周天功). Daoist Qigong practice focuses on life nurturing, attaining longevity, and transcending reality. The cultivating forms are easy and practical, such as leading and guiding the Qi (Daoyin, 导引), breathing (Tu-Na, 吐纳), focusing the mind, concentrating on deep, internal, fetal breathing, energetic fasting, human nature, life double cultivation, and so forth.

So far as Qigong practice is concerned, the Daoist Qigong School started with Laozi (老子) and Zhuangzi (庄子), who advocated the idea of "Dao follows the law of nature," "remaining detached, tranquil and acting without artifice," and "recovering the simple and returning to nature," which are the principles of Daoist Qigong practice. Laozi and Zhuangzi have thus played a significant role in the history of Chinese philosophy and in the history of Chinese Qigong as well.

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i As mentioned previously, none of the Buddhist schools called their methods of cultivation or practice "Qigong" (except for Tibetan Esoteric Buddhist cultivation). It was Qigong scholars who studied and classified Buddhist cultivation methods as one of the Qigong traditions.

C. Confucian Qigong Tradition

Confucian Qigong stresses the importance of fostering one's Qi, which is indicated by Mengzi (孟子)'s well-known saying: "cultivate my imperishable noble Qi." Confucian Qigong mainly includes cultivating Qi and meditation advocated by the students of Confucius. Sitting in Forgetfulness (忘坐法) is a representative example. Contemporary scholar Guo Moruo stated in his *The Art of Tranquilly Sitting* (静坐的功夫)[1] that sitting meditation was attributed to Yan Hui (颜回), a student of Confucius. Conventional Confucians of the Rationalistic Philosophical Division (理学派) during the Song and Ming dynasties represented by Cheng Yi (程颐), Cheng Hao (程灏), and Zhu Xi (朱熹) emphasize the idea of reinforcing Qi by meditative sitting. Cheng Hao said that "simply sitting meditatively with eyes closed can benefit the heart." Zhu Xi suggests the practice of "spending half a day reading, and the other half sitting in meditation." Attention should be paid to the difference between cultivating Qi by Confucian methods and refining Qi by Daoist methods. The prenatal and postnatal Qi refined by Daoist methods is the natural Qi in the body. However, the imperishable noble Qi cultivated by Confucian methods includes cultivating the imperishable noble spirit as well.

D. Medical Qigong Tradition

The earliest existing medical classic, *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (黄帝内经),[2] records five methods: lancing stone, strong medicine, moxibustion, nine needles, and Daoyin and massage. The last one, Daoyin (guidance) and massage, is actually ancient Qigong. It indicates that Medical Qigong has a long history and was an original component of Chinese medicine. Medical Qigong is aimed at preventing and treating disease, preserving health, and prolonging life. The New Qigong Therapy, Six Syllable Formula, Five Elements Palms, etc. selected in this book are representative. The modern popular Qigong forms, practiced by people nowadays for maintaining and improving their health, mainly fall under the school of Medical Qigong.

E. Martial Arts Qigong Tradition

Martial Arts Qigong mainly includes internal Chinese martial arts and Taiji Boxing, as well as strenuous Qigong, as indicated by the saying: "internal practicing for the Qi, and the external strengthening of the tendon, bone, muscle and skin." The typical forms of Martial Arts Qigong are Taiji Boxing, standing stake, and so on. Martial arts—the art of attack and defense—aim at improving health and strengthening the body. In the practice of Qigong, martial arts are strenuous ways of exercising Qi and force, emphasizing the mind integrating

with Qi, Qi integrating with force, Qi following the mind, and force following Qi. There are also soft ways of training the Qi and mind that involve mild movements. In martial arts, medical modalities such as massage, acupuncture, etc. are also needed for the treatment of trauma. Martial Arts Qigong is thus a combination of martial arts and medicine.

A series of Qigong for maintaining and improving health, created and promoted by the national bureau of physical culture and sports in recent years, is similar to Martial Arts Qigong in its aim, forms, and movement styles.

F. Folk Qigong Tradition

There are various forms of Folk Qigong, with unclear origins, that have been passed on privately from masters to apprentices throughout history. Practitioners are committed to the practice for preserving health and strengthening the body rather than to acquire popularity or fame. The forms are practiced and taught one-on-one from master to disciple with few written records. Some forms have already been lost, and some that are still not known to the public have yet to be discovered and studied. Some unique Qigong practicing skills handed down by ancient street artists still exist in the rural areas, and belong to the tradition of Folk Qigong.

The six schools or traditions classified above—Buddhist Qigong, Daoist Qigong, Confucian Qigong, Medical Qigong, Martial Arts Qigong, and Folk Qigong with unclear origins—are the major ones established in the history of Qigong development. Though each tradition has its own purpose and characteristics in cultivation and practice, there is no rigorous boundary between them.

II. Classification by Dynamic/Static Types

All Qigong forms can be classified based on either their dynamic or static nature with the dominant skill of the three adjustments. In terms of the manner of internal practice or external practice forms, Qigong falls into dynamic and static (still) types; and the three adjustments are the components of all the Qigong forms.

Dynamic Qigong, also known as external Qigong, is centered on the practice of posture and the movement of the body and extremities. It is therefore called "the external strengthening of the tendon, bone, muscle and skin" (外练筋骨皮). Characterized by external movement with internal stillness, dynamic Qigong can be further divided into routine dynamic Qigong, the movements of which are already established, and spontaneous dynamic Qigong, of which the movements are individualized and innovated naturally.

Still/static Qigong, also known as internal Qigong, focuses mainly on adjusting the mind and the breathing, silent chanting, mental visualization, and breathing (Tu-Na), with few body movements. Still Qigong is therefore known as "internal cultivation of the essence, Qi and spirit" (内练精气神). Characterized by external stillness with internal movement, still Qigong falls into two types, centering mainly on mind and breath adjustment. Though the body postures can be the same, they are fundamentally different in terms of internal practicing.

There are also some Qigong forms, such as standing stake, that integrate the characteristics of both dynamic and still Qigong, demonstrating that dynamic and still Qigong states are inter-related without a clear dividing line between them.

III. Classification by the Three Adjustments

The three adjustments are the components of Qigong practice. In terms of the three adjustments, Qigong can be divided into the following categories: mind adjustment, breath adjustment, and body posture adjustment. Characterized by prolonged and intense contemplation, and sitting in forgetfulness, mind adjustment adopts approaches such as "keeping the mind on," mental visualization, and entering tranquility. Represented by New Qigong Therapy, Internal Nourishing Qigong, etc., breath adjustment is characterized by the employment of Tu-Na, turtle breathing, and circulating Qi. Represented by Eight Pieces of Brocade and Health Preserving Qigong, body posture adjustment focuses on body posture, body movements, and massage.

Undoubtedly, each adjustment type is ultimately aimed at reaching the state of integrating the three adjustments into one. The difference lies only in the varying emphases and starting points. The goal for all three is the same.

IV. Classification by Practice Style or Characteristics

The long history of mutual influence and communication among various Qigong schools in both theory and form renders it complex to categorize Qigong practice styles based on any single criterion. Based on characteristics of traditional Qigong practice, Qigong schools fall into five major categories, as described below.

A. Daoyin Style (导引派)

Daoyin means leading the flow of internal Qi by exercising the body and the limbs externally. Focusing mainly on the body, the Daoyin style is characterized by physical exercises and self-massage. As mentioned above, dynamic Qigong can be divided into routine dynamic Qigong and spontaneous dynamic Qigong; and routine dynamic Qigong has different movement forms and styles. For example, gymnastic Daoyin highlights the elegance and smoothness of movements and has the effect of clearing the meridians and strengthening the tendons and bones. Massaging Daoyin employs pushing, grasping, rubbing, kneading, pressing, compressing, scrubbing, hitting, and patting to promote the flow of Qi and blood, and strengthening of the immune system to eliminate pathogenic factors. The movements induced by spontaneous dynamic Daoyin result from extreme tranquility, and follow the routine of starting with mild movements that gradually change to accentuated ones and then back to mild ones again. Motions such as massaging and patting, sometimes seen here, may support activating the joints and tendons, invigorating the Qi and blood, and fighting disease.

B. Tu-Na Style (吐纳派)

This style of practice focuses mainly on adjusting breath. Tu-Na is breathing; Tu is exhaling and Na is inhaling. The Tu-Na style refines and circulates Qi by exhaling and inhaling essence Qi—blowing out the old, and breathing in the new. It can be divided into three branches: inhaling branch, exhaling branch, and fetal breathing branch. The inhaling branch, also known as the breath holding branch, stresses the idea of holding your breath as long as possible after inhaling. The exhaling branch emphasizes exhalation, either exhaling while making a sound or without sound. Fetal breathing is the practice of breathing to render the breath fine, thin, slow, and subtle by imagining the breath coming in and going out through the navel or the sweat pores. Hence it is also named navel breathing or body breathing.

C. Tranquil and Prolonged Meditation Style (静定派)

This style of practice focuses the mind on one realm. Tranquility makes clarity; and prolonged meditation requires sitting still. The tranquil and prolonged meditation style practice emphasizes turning the mind inward to render the heart as clear as a mirror and as still as Water. It is not deathly stillness; the vitality is contained within. Many meditation types belong to this style, such as Sitting in Forgetfulness in Confucianism, mentally focusing on one and

concentrating on the internal to enter the tranquil meditative state in Daoism, and prolonged and intense contemplation in Buddhism.

D. Mental Visualization Style (存想派)

Mental visualization is imagination. This style of still Qigong practice uses deep imagination to focus the mind and induce the imaginary realities for therapeutic effect. The practitioner can imagine everything from external scenery such as the sun, moon, stars, clouds, mountains, and seas to internal structures such as organs and meridians. Vivid imagination leads to better therapeutic results.

E. Heavenly Circulation Style (周天派)

Circulation Qigong originates from the ancient art of internal elixir and is hence also known as internal elixir art. Mentally focused on the elixir when practicing, one imagines Qi flowing calculatedly along the govenor vessel, the conception vessel, and the eight extra meridians. The circulation style can be further classified into Small Circulation, in which the Qi is circulated along the govenor vessel, and Grand Circulation, in which the Qi is circulated along the eight extra meridians.

2. Guidelines and Precautions for Practice

There are numerous types of Qigong form; each one has its own guidelines. Regardless of what type of Qigong form is chosen, the practitioner must follow some common basic principles in practice. These basic principles are important for the high quality of Qigong practice, and for attaining a high-level Qigong state. Proper practice ensures positive results and eliminates potential negative effects. The basic practice principles include guidelines and precautions for practice.

I. Guidelines

Guidelines refer to the requirements necessary for the basic practices. They are the key to mastering the practical skills and inducing the desired effects. Adverse reactions or Qigong "deviation" may arise if the guidelines are not properly followed. It is thus crucial to know and learn these guidelines by heart.

A. Relaxation, Tranquility, and Naturalness; Practice Properly and Flexibly

Relaxation and tranquility are the fundamental requirements and methods for all Qigong practice. Relaxation is relaxing the posture and spirit, the body and mind, the internal and the external. External relaxation is the relaxation of all the muscles in the extremities. It is generally easier than internal relaxation, which relieves respiratory and mental tension. The progression of relaxation is generally divided into two stages: from external to internal, and from extensive to intensive. Tranquility is keeping the mind relatively serene, since absolute tranquility does not exist. The practice of tranquility in Qigong requires a quiet external surrounding and a peaceful internal world. Internal tranquility, with your mind relaxed and focused, is more important than external silence. Failure to stay tranquil in Qigong practice should be detected so that the necessary measures to reach tranquility can be applied. The outer surroundings are not to be held solely responsible for distractions. After all, peace of mind is more important than either the body or the surroundings.

Relaxation and tranquility are mutually associated and promoted: relaxing can induce tranquility while tranquility helps relaxing. Complete relaxation is possible only when complete tranquility is present, and vice versa.

"Practicing naturally" means following the law of nature in practice without any force, that is, the activities of adjusting the body, adjusting the breathing, and adjusting the mind should be in accord with the natural state of physiological nature. Therefore, the process of the activities is the key point here. For example, the length of abdominal breathing should be prolonged in a progressive manner rather than forcefully, and when "keeping the mind on" something, the mind should be focused intentionally but not painstakingly. Overall, practicing naturally requires the practitioner to follow the principle of "no forgetting, no aiding, no lusting, and no desiring" in Qigong practice.

Proper and flexible practice and relaxation and tranquility are mutually associated and promoted. In terms of adjusting the body, practicing properly helps induce the effect of relaxation and tranquility. Wrong postures interfere with learners' access to relaxation and tranquility, leading to less desirable effects, or even injury or ultra-deviation. Proper "right" posture, however, is not to be held rigidly, but rather with flexibility. Flexible practice that also includes the correct postures and movements for each individual is largely dependent on the individual's specific physiological and psychological characteristics at his/her stage of practice. Thus, the difficulty and intensity should be adjusted according to the individual, the time, the place, and his/her attained state, in order to produce the desired mental and physical relaxation. Otherwise, improper practice may produce only stress and fatigue. The same rule of proper

and flexible practice should be applied to the adjustment of the breathing and to the adjustment of the mind as well.

B. Combining the Dynamic with the Still; Practicing with Nourishing

The dynamic and the still are two opposites of a unity. Mutually affecting and promoting, the combination of the two aspects is beneficial for Qigong practice.

Combining the dynamic with the still has the following two meanings. First, dynamic Qigong should be combined with static Qigong in practice since motion fosters Yang and tranquility breeds Yin. Mere dynamic or still Qigong tends to unbalance Yin and Yang, whereas their combination can harmonize Yin and Yang and is very conducive to health preservation and disease prevention. Second, in practicing dynamic Qigong, body movements and mental tranquility go hand in hand. The mind is focused on the movements to fulfill the principle of embodying tranquility in motion. On the other hand, practicing still Qigong can relax the body and promote the flow of Qi and blood, namely embodying motion in tranquility. All in all, a combination of the dynamic with the still is beneficial to both external body movements and the gathering and flowing of internal Qi, and can therefore enhance the efficiency of Qigong practice.

Combining practice with nourishment gives equal priority to Qigong practice and to proper rest and nourishment. In the practice of Qigong, nourishment is important, especially for those with a poor constitution or chronic disease. Practicing refers to a proper choice of Qigong forms, intensity, and intervals, followed by serious practicing. Nourishment refers to the improved general function through Qigong practice, as well as that through adequate resting and nourishment after Qigong practice. The improved general function manifests itself in harmonized functions, comfortable feelings, smooth, tender, even breathing, and a highly peaceful mind. Adequate resting and nourishment involves timely resting and practicing, and adjustment and rehabilitation of body and mind. Beginners may experience fatigue caused by energy consumption, so more nutrition is needed in the diet, which is another layer of meaning for nourishment.

C. Practicing in Proper Sequence, and with Perseverance

Practicing in the proper sequence, or progressing from the beginning to the advanced level, is the law to follow in learning Qigong. The higher level will be achieved gradually step by step, but not by one gigantic jump. The rule of perseverance tells us that Qigong should be practiced persistently over a long period of time; the master's level cannot be reached by one day's practice. The

general practical skills of Qigong maneuvers are not hard to learn. However, it is not easy to absorb its essence and reach the Qigong realm. It is thus possible for a beginner to master the basics and related knowledge in a short period of time. The desired effects, however, can be obtained only if the practitioner is persistent in practicing the form and accumulating experience from the moment he/she starts it. "Climbing up only, without asking how high the mountain is" (只顾攀登, 莫问山高) is another law to follow. Qigong practice is a process of constant accumulation, and needs patience. As long as one perseveres with the practice, the effects will be obtained gradually, from minor to dramatic.

In addition, the length or duration of practice for the desired effects varies depending on the practitioner's physical condition, underlying state of health, and the form he/she practices. The duration of the Qigong effect depends on the level of the person entering the Qigong realm. For example, some practitioners can have significant improvement in physical constitution in ten days while others may have to wait for one to three months or even longer. Some practitioners do not display any distinctive changes for a long time, whereas others may start with positive effects which soon diminish. Whatever the effects, it is important to keep the right attitude based on proper analysis and, in summary, be confident, be patient, and be persistent in practice.

Qigong is a practical course, and long-term practice is the only way to get real effects, as conveyed by the ancient Chinese sayings "Sincerity produces effects" (心诚则灵) and "Practice a thousand times, and the effects will show" (练功千遍, 其效自见). If the practitioner blows hot and cold or is inconsistent or indulged in the wildest fantasy of pursuing magic, no matter how talented he or she is, there would be no progress or any therapeutic effects.

II. Precautions Before and After Practicing

Precautions for Qigong include preparations before and after practice, which can serve as the transition between the state of everyday life and state of practice.

A. Before Practicing

1. Choose a tidy and quiet place to practice. It could be indoors or outdoors with mild lighting and enough ventilation. Avoid direct wind and keep warm to avoid catching a cold. Generally speaking, the woods with waters and hills around would be the best. Facilities such as a bed, chair, couch, and pad should be appropriate in height and moderate in rigidity. Materials of wood or other natural material are preferred.

2. Do not conduct any intense physical or entertainment activities half an hour before practicing Qigong. Prepare yourself mentally, free from all emotions, and calm the mind. Dress comfortably with loose clothes of soft materials in mild colors. Take off accessories such as hats, glasses, watches, etc.
3. Do not exercise when hungry or stuffed to avoid a gastrointestinal disorder. Go to the toilet before practicing. Do not hold stool or urine during practice for too long, otherwise it will lead to abdominal distension. Some warm water before practicing is beneficial for the flow of Qi and blood.
4. Before practicing, move a little to relax the joints and meridians or self-massage a bit to promote the flow of Qi and blood. Take a rest when you feel fatigue. If localized discomforts and pain are distinct, treatment could be applied to relieve the symptoms first.

B. After Practicing

1. End practice carefully. Different types of Qigong end differently, yet there is a basic rule to follow unless there are special requirements for some Qigong forms: finalize by concentrating on the elixir (Dantian) regardless of where the mind was previously. Imagine Qi from every part slowly gathering to the elixir, and gradually return to natural breathing. Do some self-massage before opening the eyes.
2. Static Qigong could be ended with some activities of the body and limbs, while dynamic Qigong could be ended with several deep breaths and a few minutes of rest.
3. Do not wash hands in cold water or take a cold shower right after practice. Sweat should be dried with a towel or be washed by taking a hot bath. This is because a lot of blood has rushed to the peripheral skin and muscle during practice. Exposure to cold water will cause vessels in the skin and muscles to contract suddenly, leading to an increase of blood flowing back to the heart and adding to its burden. Moreover, do not have cold water or cold drinks, since sudden contraction of the vessels in the stomach and intestine could result in gastrointestinal disorder, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.

In addition, women in menstruation, pregnancy, or prenatal period are not advised to practice concentrating on the elixir field, abdominal breathing, or other forms with intense activities. Patients practicing Qigong to treat diseases should abstain or cease sexual intercourse. Do not practice in stormy

weather with lightning or thunder. Patients with infectious diseases or immoral tendencies should not be allowed to attend group Qigong practice.

3. Possible Reactions to Qigong Practice

Possible reactions to Qigong practice, including normal and adverse reactions, refer to physical and mental changes or special sensations induced by Qigong practice. The reactions normally occur during Qigong practicing; they could last some while (but not long) after practicing.

I. Normal Reactions

Normal reactions or effective reactions are the natural and anticipated changes or feelings felt in the process of practicing Qigong and are indicators of progress or benefit.

A. "Pulsations and Senses" Reaction (动触反映)

Spontaneous muscle movements or unusual perceptions known as "pulsations and senses" may arise during practice. Pulsations refer to motion including movements of the limbs and muscle contractions, while senses refer to body feelings and the senses from sense organs. *Primary Shamatha and Vipasyana* (童蒙止观)[3] recorded eight senses: pain, itchiness, coldness, warmth, lightness, heaviness, astringency, and slipperiness. Together with the eight other senses —contraction, stretching, coolness, hotness, floating, sinking, hardening, and softening—they comprise 16 pulsations and senses. Please note that when we talk about "eight senses" or "16 pulsations" here, the numbers eight or 16 are used to describe "more" but are not limited to eight or sixteen. Actually the senses and pulsations induced in Qigong practice are far beyond the above-mentioned senses.

Research shows that the sense of hotness is most common, second to which comes automatic muscle contraction, followed by the other senses. During Qigong practice, some practitioners may feel as if they are walking on clouds like a fairy or as if the body does not exist, while others may have exceptional proprioceptive senses such as failing to be aware of the location of their own hands, feet, or head, or feeling taller or shorter than before. These senses are generally localized and transient, possibly resulting from increased blood flow

into the brain, improved cerebral sensibility in a Qigong state, or anticipated mental state produced at a certain stage. They are normal reactions and will not bring any negative effects on either the practice or the body.

Normal as they are, the practitioner is warned against over-reacting, by either getting curious or seeking the effects. It is wise to turn a blind eye and let the "pulsations and senses" run their own course without any subjective intervention.

B. "Meridians and Collaterals Clearing" Reaction (疏经通脉反应)

Practitioners may experience a variety of "meridians and collaterals clearing" reactions at certain stages, such as pulsations or heat circulating along the meridians or even Qi flowing along the Grand and Small Circulation. Some meridian-sensitive people may even experience meridian transmission in a Qigong state, as in a warm stream flowing along the meridians.

When the genuine Qi is abundant, it will start removing blockages in the meridians and attack the diseased region. At this stage, some patients may suffer from aggravated symptoms or even experience previous symptoms resurfacing. This phenomenon is referred to as a "relapse of diseases" (翻病) in Qigong and is no cause for worry. Reduce the duration of practice moderately but persist in practicing. The symptoms will be relieved when the stagnant Qi in the diseased region is dispersed.

C. Physiological and Functional Reactions (生理机能反应)

Digestive functions usually improve after Qigong practice due to increased gastrointestinal motility, manifesting in gurgling noises of the stomach, increased passing of gas, smooth bowel movements, improved appetite, and digestive absorption.

Those who practice static Qigong often have increased saliva secretion. It is wise to swallow the saliva to help digestion and supplement the body fluids. *Plain Questions* or *Su Wen* (素问)[2] states: "Those suffering from lingering kidney diseases…gulp down plenty of sublingual saliva." The ancient Chinese believed that "Qi and fluid are the medicine for longevity… Practice persistently, life can be prolonged." Thus it can be seen that the increase of saliva is an indicator of proper practicing, and the saliva should be swallowed slowly rather than be spat out.

Practicing Qigong can promote the metabolism and produce chain reactions in the body. The warmth felt in the body during practice, for example, is the result of invigorating Qi, gathering genuine Qi, and redistributing blood by

the body. Sweating is often present in practice, and it is best to have it slightly increased. Qigong practice also brings about clarified mind, improved energy, increased libido, rosy complexion, fast-growing nails and hairs, and lustrous skin. On top of all this, some practitioners even regain youth, with gray hairs turning back to black.

All of the above are indications of improved metabolism, which is good for longevity and youth preservation.

D. Reactions of Entering Tranquil Meditation State (练功入静反应)

Tranquility is the Qigong state of being highly serene and at ease, with the practitioner truly relaxed and conscious. Entering tranquility is the basic mental state during still Qigong practice. Dynamic Qigong practice also involves entering mental tranquility while moving the body.

Beginning practitioners of still Qigong often fail to enter the tranquil meditation state at first because of miscellaneous thoughts, called "distraction" by ancient peoples. It is impossible to eliminate miscellaneous thoughts all at once. The harder he/she strains, the more difficult it is to achieve the goal. It is often the case that "the more haste, the less speed" (欲速则不达), so eliminating stray thoughts takes patience. The learner can take a strategic approach and employ methods such as keeping the mind on acupoints, on the elixir field, on breathing, or by silent chanting, as well as by replacing miscellaneous thoughts with one thought. The natural and gradual exclusion of stray thoughts can be achieved.

Opposite to distraction, the mental state of drowsiness, or "stupor," may also be present. With eyes closed, body relaxed and breath adjusted, beginners tend to fall asleep in the quiet and peaceful environment. Moreover, exclusion of stray thoughts and an inactive mind contributes further to the occurrence of drowsiness. This state is not abnormal, but should be avoided. When drowsiness occurs during Qigong practice, the practitioner can open the eyes a little and focus on the tip of the nose to avoid sleeping and stupor.

II. Adverse Reactions

Adverse reactions refer to a variety of slightly uncomfortable feelings and physical and mental changes caused by improper adjustment of body, breathing, and mind during Qigong practice, but are not serious to the point of affecting normal life and work. Adverse reactions are also called unhealthy reactions.

They usually occur in the initial stage of Qigong practice when the body's mechanism is in the process of adapting to the "three adjustments" physically and mentally. Improper or unskillful practice may also trigger adverse reactions, represented by some uncomfortable feelings or unhealthy reactions, which affect normal physical and mental being and the progress of Qigong practice.

Adverse reactions are neither the anticipated Qigong effects nor Qigong deviation. Regulated in time, most reactions can disappear quickly, but if they are ignored for a long time, deviation may occur. Adverse reactions that frequently arise are listed as follows.

A. Headache and Distension of Head

Headache and distension of the head are the commonly seen adverse reactions either during or after Qigong practice. They are mainly caused by over-concentration while adjusting the mind, or forcefully leading Qi and blood to the head. For over-concentration, the recommendation is to reduce the intensity of concentration and adopt a partial focus. For patients with hypertension, arteriosclerosis, and neurasthenia, it is best to concentrate on the lower elixir field instead of the upper one. Besides, it is not correct for beginners to use the practice method of leading the Qi with the mind. If headache or dizziness persists after Qigong practice, the head exercises of Health Preserving Qigong can be helpful to relieve the symptoms.

B. Stuffiness in the Chest and Difficulty Breathing

These symptoms are caused by stiff posture, over-extension of the muscle, squaring or over-bending of the shoulders, violent breathing, pursuit of deep, fine, and long breathing, overly long pause in breathing, or over-concentration on breathing during practice. The key to dealing with these problems is to diagnose the root cause and find solutions by, for instance, correcting the posture, drawing in the chest to relax the pectoral muscles rather than straightening it, and changing to natural breathing to ensure the Qi circulates smoothly. In this way the symptoms of stuffiness can be relieved.

C. Heart-Pounding or Palpitations

Palpitation is often attributed to worrying, constrained posture, incomplete relaxation, forced breathing, overly deep and long breathing, imposed breathing pauses, or nervousness. Moreover, palpitation is more common in patients with cardiac neurosis or other heart diseases. Adverse reactions of the heart will disappear if the inducing factors are removed. For example, relax both mentally and somatically, take a proper posture, and breathe naturally. Those with cardiac

neurosis or other heart diseases should take medicine regularly to put the symptoms under control.

D. Muscular Soreness or Pain

Feeling soreness, fatigue, or weakness in the lower limbs or around the shoulders in the early stages of practice is common among beginners who are eagerly pursuing success or practitioners who are physically weak and who employ forms that over-consume energy, with prolonged practice. Muscle soreness or pain is also experienced by those who use a wrong posture or fail to relax while adjusting the body. Beginners weak in constitution are advised to use the lying, semi-reclining, or leaning and sitting postures until their physical conditions are well enough to change to a sitting or standing posture. It is dangerous to crave instant success. The practitioner should follow the principle of practicing in the proper sequence. Besides, one needs to prepare oneself well before practice by entering a tranquil state of mind, taking a proper posture, and relaxing the body.

4. Qigong Deviations and Corrections

Qigong "deviation," also known as "overrunning of fire and entrance of demons" (走火入魔), or deviation for short, is the serious negative somatic or mental reactions in the course of practicing Qigong. Deviation is represented by functional, psychological, emotional, or behavioral disorders that affect the practitioner's normal life or work and is unlikely to disappear spontaneously. Qigong deviation differs from adverse reactions that do not interfere with the activities of daily life and will mostly disappear spontaneously or be relieved by proper medical intervention.

"Overrunning of fire" is the term from Taoist Qigong practice, which indicates the Qi is turbulent because of improper-regulated fire (mind and the intensity of breathing). "Entrance of demons" is the term from Buddhist Qigong practice describing the condition in which one mistakes hallucination for reality after entering a tranquil state. According to modern medical knowledge, "overrunning of fire" implies physical somatic disorders, and "entrance of demons" indicates psychological and mental disorders. "Overrunning of fire" and "entrance of demons" are used together because physical and mental disorders often develop together and they affect each other.

I. The Causes of Deviation

There are two types of Qigong deviation categorized by different causes. Type one deviation is caused by improper practice of the three adjustments. In other words, lack of guidance from a knowledgeable Qigong instructor,[ii] improper performance, or improper intensity and length of time during the process of adjusting the body, the breathing, or the mind can cause Qigong deviations. For example: during the practice of "keep the mind on" and imagining, hallucinations can be induced by eagerly pursuing success, high intensity, and prolonged practice time. Type two deviation occurs among practitioners who have a tendency to develop psychiatric or mental disorders: either they have a medical history of psychosis or mental disease, or a family history of mental illness, or have constitutional mental defects.

Generally speaking, type one deviation is a real Qigong deviation, which is due to improper Qigong practice. However, for type two deviation, Qigong practice may only be an inducing factor but not the real reason for it. Clinically, cases of type two deviation are more frequent than cases of type one deviation. For people with symptoms of deviation, most have a medical history of psychological disorder or a family history of mental illness. Those who did not have either personal or family histories of mental disorder mostly have conditions such as introvertion, loneliness, over-sensitivity, or lack of logical thinking; without Qigong practice, other factors may eventually trigger the psychological disorders for them as well.

It is very important to differentiate between the two types of deviation because the prognoses are different. Type one deviation has a better prognosis and most people can fully recover. However, the prognosis for type two deviation is not good; it is difficult to cure, and may progress further to schizophrenia or other psychiatric disorders.

II. Symptoms of Deviation

Qigong deviation occurs with a variety of serious negative physiological or psychological changes and symptoms, which can be divided into two categories: somatic symptoms and mental and emotional symptoms.

ii The typical examples of misclassifying normal reactions as Qigong deviation include: (1) not knowing the normal Qigong state of inner sight or scenery in deep meditation, mislabeling them as psychotic hallucination; (2) not knowing the possible intense pain during "meridians and collaterals clearing," mislabeling them as abnormal somatic symptoms of Qigong practice.

A. Somatic Symptoms

1. Head: Cloudiness in the head, headache, distension of the head, the feeling of Qi rushing to the head, compression at the top of the head, a hoop fastening around the head, etc.
2. Chest and back: Fullness in the chest, palpitation, shortness of breath, uneven breathing, difficulty in breathing, hypochondriac distension, cold or hot feeling in the chest or back, etc.
3. Lower back, abdomen, and perineum: Abdominal distension or pain, loss of appetite, constipation, diarrhea, borborygmus, heavy pain in the lower back, accumulated heat at the elixir, emission or spermatorrhoea, self-feeling of Qi leakage through perineum or anus, etc.
4. Four limbs: Numbness, distension, weakness or flaccidity, shaking in the arms or legs, etc.
5. Whole body: Profuse cold perspiration, unbearable sensation of soreness, distension, coldness or hotness, uncontrollable rushing of the internal Qi up and down the body, or intensified and strange ceaseless body and limb movement due to Qi disorder.

B. Mental and Emotional Symptoms

Mental and emotional symptoms are known as "Qigong-induced mental disorders" in some psychiatric textbooks. Mental deviation patients without a family history of mental diseases, and those who are not in the high-risk groups for psychosis, usually have a favorable prognosis; otherwise, the prognosis is poor.

1. Neurasthenia

This type is characterized by the coexistence of various mental or somatic symptoms, mainly manifested as restlessness both outside and inside, due to uncontrollable rushing of Qi to the whole body. Somatic symptoms are often accompanied by insomnia, profuse dreams, scanty sleep, moodiness, poor memory, concentration impairment, etc.

2. Affective Disorder

Affective disorder is characterized by moodiness, depression, mania, nervousness, anxiety, sadness, irritability, crying or laughing, rolling about, and clamor. The patient talks about and often relates to the Qigong teacher or the Qigong form

he/she practices, and the symptom is paroxysmal with slight disturbance of consciousness.

3. Disorder of Self-Consciousness

The patients usually claim to have been possessed by the Qigong teacher, a god, ghost, or some spirit. The voice of the patient becomes strange, and their expression, behavior, and way of talking resemble the one that has possessed them. This phenomenon is seen in practitioners who practice in special Qigong culture circumstances and has hence been titled "cultural phrenoblabia syndrome" (与文化相关的精神障碍综合征).

4. Hallucination and Paranoia

Hallucination and paranoia are common symptoms of Qigong deviation, manifesting as the most ridiculous and weird fantasies. Hallucination often involves acousma, heteroptics, and occasionally haptic hallucination and olfactory hallucination as well. It is, in most cases, pseudo-hallucination related to the content of Qigong practice, religion, or superstition, and is not very vivid or clear. Paranoia can be classified as paranoia of foreign influences, of being murdered, of grandeur, and of guilt. Paranoia of foreign influences, such as believing oneself is being controlled by the Qigong teacher or a special instrument, is more prominent. Most patients do not admit that they are mentally ill. Instead, they attribute their conditions to other people's evil intentions. Therefore, they tend to refuse treatment but put trust in the Qigong teacher. Generally, no abnormal indicators as a result of physical or laboratory examination are shown in such patients' medical records. However, before they are diagnosed, most of these patients have introverted, unsociable, eccentric, and sensitive personalities, and are lacking in the ability to think logically.

Once symptoms of hallucination or paranoia develop, it is wise to consult a doctor right away to prevent the condition from worsening.

III. Classifications

According to syndrome recognition in TCM, Qigong deviation falls into two categories: Qi disturbance, and mental and emotional disorder.

Qi disturbance can be further classified as the syndrome of Qi stagnation with blood stasis and the syndrome of wandering internal Qi. The former is mainly caused by improper use of the mind, suspicion, and anxiety. It is believed in TCM that "stagnation of the liver Qi leads to Qi stagnation," "anxiety causes Qi blockage," and "Qi stagnation leads to blood stasis," manifesting mainly in self-felt stagnation of internal Qi at localized regions, such as the head, chest,

or lower abdomen, causing intolerable pain and distension. The principle of treatment is to promote Qi, dredge collaterals, activate blood, and remove stasis. The syndrome of wandering internal Qi is a result of improper maneuvering of breathing or mind, or being startled in the course of Qigong practice. TCM holds that fright leads to Qi disorder, manifested as ceaseless and uncontrollable rushing of the internal Qi inside the whole body, restless and uncontrollable body movements, and irritability. The principle of treatment is to smooth the Qi and calm the spirit to conduct the Qi back to its origin.

Mental and emotional disorder can be further divided into the syndromes of stagnation of phlegm and Qi, and that of the spirit of the heart disturbed by the fire of the phlegm, both of which belong to "the manic depressive psychosis" in TCM. The former syndrome is seen in those patients who practice Qigong improperly and is subject to inherent depressive and introverted personalities. In TCM, it is differentiated as stagnation of phlegm and Qi due to stagnation of the liver Qi and accumulated phlegm resulting from deficiency of the spleen. Patients of this type have various emotional disorders. The principle of treatment is to soothe and alleviate the depressed liver, and resolve phlegm to open the tricky gate. The latter, syndrome of the heart spirit disturbed by fire of the phlegm, is usually attributed to improper Qigong practice of such people who are learning disabled, irritable, or who mistake hallucination for truth. In TCM it is differentiated as spirit of the heart disturbed by the liver fire and phlegm. These patients have varied types of mental problems, insomnia, and headache. The principle of treatment is to clear the liver fire and eliminate phlegm to open the tricky gate.

Clinically, methods such as locating pressure points, patting, guiding, acupuncture, moxibustion, and herbal medicine are applied under the principle of TCM syndrome recognition and classification, deficiency excessiveness, and cold-heat treatments. The purpose of the treatments is to smooth and promote Qi, remove blockage in collaterals, eliminate phlegm, conduct Qi back to its origin, and calm the spirit.

IV. Treatment Methods for Correction of Deviations

First of all, it is important to release the patient's mental nervousness and encourage him/her to gain confidence in correction. It also helps to encourage the patient to participate in recreational activities and light physical work. Eliminating a pessimistic mentality and promoting optimistic emotion can speed up the treatment of deviation. Besides, patients with deviation often misunderstand Qigong practice, having much higher expectations. Therefore, one needs to analyze the patient's exercise principles and key points according to the patient's situation and symptoms of deviation, and to help the patient

correctly understand Qigong practice in order to correct the deviation. Below are the methods of correction treatment.

A. Self-Correction

Once deviation occurs, stop Qigong practice promptly in order to start self-regulation according to the inducing factors. Measures such as correcting improper posture, breathing, or mind, the methods of the three adjustments, can be taken, along with self-massage, acupuncture, and guidance (Daoyin).

1. Body Relaxation

The method of relaxation to ease stress is applicable to the cases of deviation due to physical or respiratory tension or nervousness. For detailed information, please refer to Relaxation Qigong or the relaxation exercises often used clinically in Chapter 6, "Selected Qigong Forms."

2. Natural Walking

Stand naturally and relax thoroughly. Then walk ahead in a natural way. Step out with the heel first and look straight forward with the neck erect and the arms swinging naturally. Walk at a speed of 60–70 steps per minute for 20–30 minutes or 60 minutes in the morning and evening respectively, depending on individual conditions. Keep the whole body natural and relaxed while walking to smooth the Qi and blood of the entire body, ease the nerves, and regulate Yin and Yang balance. This form is easy to learn and practice, and is quick to master.

3. Meridian Self-Vibrating

If the symptom of deviation is mild, apply meridian self-vibrating to smooth Qi and blood and to eliminate the symptom. Take the natural standing stake posture. Stand upright with the arms hanging at the sides and knees naturally stretched. Relax thoroughly. Raise the heels while inhaling and stamp them while exhaling. It is especially important to feel the vibration up to the back of the head. Perform the self-vibrating 36 times each practice, and practice 3–4 times daily accordingly.

4. Meridian Self-Patting

Stand naturally, with feet shoulder-width apart and parallel to each other. Relax thoroughly. Pat along the 12 meridian routes with palms in the following order:

1. From chest to palms along the inner sides of the arms.
2. From the back of the hands to the head along the lateral sides of the arms, with the left side first and then the right side.

3. From the back of the head down to the back and along the posterior of the legs to the heels, and then from the dorsum of the foot upward, along the anterior sides of the legs to the abdomen, and finally through the chest to the face and head.

There should be two cycles each time, once a day; alternate one cycle of slight patting with one cycle of heavy patting. This form helps correct the deviation of reversed Qi movement by smoothing Qi and blood, removing blockages in meridians, and balancing Yin and Yang.

5. Acupoints Massage

Push or rub the pressure points of Danzhong (膻中, CV-17) and Dazhui (大椎, DU-14) with three fingers or the palm for ten minutes each time, 1–2 times a day, to smooth all the Yin and Yang vessels and conduct the reversed Qi back to its origin. In addition, massage the soles with the palms every day, 300 times for each sole, so as to conduct Qi downward to them.

The self-correction methods above for deviation are optional for patients depending on their deviation symptoms, body constitution, and personal preferences.

B. Treatment Methods for Deviation

If self-correction fails to relieve the symptoms of deviation, patients should go to a hospital for further treatment immediately to prevent symptoms from worsening. Methods commonly used clinically are as follows.

1. Psychological Reasoning

Qigong deviation is induced by different causes: uninstructed practice based on isolated reading of related books, lack of grasp of the main points, inherent mental defects, depression provoked by Qigong practice, or blind pursuit of sensations or visions. Therefore, reasoning, psychological guidance, and communication have a very significant role before offering clinical treatment. Imparting to patients the proper scientific methods and the key points can correct their wrong understanding about Qigong and help relieve their depression. Once the patients have built confidence in the doctor, they can be more cooperative in the treatment.

2. Qigong Guidance

To correct Qigong deviation by Qigong Daoyin or Qigong guidance is to choose the treatment method based on the cause of the deviation. Qigong

Daoyin should be performed by high-level Qigong practicing masters. Good treatment results can be seen when Qigong guidance is applied properly.

Clinical Treatment

1. Acupuncture, patting, and massage: Determine the proper treatment principle and methods based on deviation syndrome recognition and classification. The Qigong doctor manipulates Qi to the palms before pressing, patting, or massaging the patient's acupoints such as Baihui (百会, GV-20), Yintang (印堂), Taiyang (太阳), Shenting (神庭), and Fengchi (风池) along meridians in the head; Tiantu (天突), Danzhong (膻中), Qimen (神门), and Zhongwan (中脘) in the chest; and Qihai (气海), Guanyuan (关元), Daheng (大横), and Tianshu (天枢) in the abdomen. This treatment helps to remove blockages in the meridians and collaterals, eliminate phlegm, open the tricky gate, and conduct Qi back to its origin.
2. Guiding with external Qi: For serious cases of deviation, the Qigong doctor needs to apply external Qi and impart self-correction methods as well. Smoothing Qi and descending Qi methods, for instance, are applicable based on deviation differentiation. Guiding with external Qi is effective for some cases. For more information about the mechanism of and debates on external Qi, please refer to the related discussions in Chapter 3, "Modern Scientific Research on Qigong."

Symptomatic Correction of Deviation

1. Mount-Tai pressing atop (泰山压顶): The uncomfortable heavy pressing feeling on the head during Qigong practice is figuratively termed "Mount-Tai pressing atop." It is the gathering of localized Qi due to over-concentration of the mind. Treatment recommendations may include: (a) temporarily stopping the Qigong form currently being practiced, changing to Relaxation Qigong, and rubbing the acupoints of Taiyang (太阳) and Fengchi (风池) 100 times respectively after the practice; and (b) the Qigong doctor pushes Baihui (百会) with the tip of his/her thumb, the hand half clenched, and applies external Qi to push downward for several times until the patient feels relaxed in the head as if being relieved of a heavy load.
2. Leakage of Qi or emission: Leakage of Qi refers to self-sensation of Qi passing in and out from external genitalia or perineum during or after Qigong practice, which may develop into nocturnal emission in men. Treatment methods may include the following: (a) frequently rubbing

the elixir and Shenshu (肾俞) until it gets slightly warm is effective for reducing leakage and emission; (b) do the exercise of tightening the anus and contracting the abdomen; (c) the Qigong doctor applies external Qi to the patient's Shenque (神厥), Guanyuan (关元), and Mingmen (命门) points until the lower abdomen grows slightly warm; and (d) herbal medicine treatment is implemented.

3. Ceaseless Qi movement: This refers to the sensation of Qi rushing uncontrollably inside the body, Qi blocked at Jiaji (夹脊) or Yuzhen (玉枕), or Qi lingering in the head. It is also known as upward Qi rushing to the head or chest, or downward rushing to the elixir. Treatment methods may include the following: (a) stop practicing; (b) use local or general patting according to the location of Qi movement or stagnation either by oneself or by the Qigong doctor—the acupoints and meridians to pat can be the Baihui (百会), Yuzhen (玉枕), Feishu (肺俞), Gaohuang (膏肓), and Mingmen (命门), and patting on the govenor vessel, bladder meridian, or gallbladder meridian, is also advisable; and (c) practice "XU" and "HU" in the Six Syllable Formula.

4. Incessant and uncontrollable body movements: Incessant movement of the head or the body develops mostly from the practitioner's blind pursuit of pulsations and senses. It generally manifests in bending and stretching of the body, dancing with feet and hands, or even rolling or jumping, usually from slight movements to dramatic ones. Treatment methods may include the following: (a) stop practicing; (b) the Qigong doctor may slap the back of the patient with the hand or shout loudly to stop the movements—the sudden strong stimulus sometimes produces good effects; and (c) the Qigong doctor may apply external Qi to massage the patient's acupoints such as the Dazhui (大椎), Quchi (曲池), Hegu (合谷), and Jianjing (肩井), or guide Qi back to its own meridian and collateral. Once the reversed Qi is smoothed, these uncontrollable movements can be brought under control.

5. Ultra deviation: This refers to symptoms such as depression, mania, trance, hallucination, paranoia, and unreasonable crying or laughing during or after Qigong practice, which is the most severe Qigong deviation. Treatment methods may include the following: (a) psychological treatment or reasoning; and (b) the Qigong doctor presses acupoints such as the Baihui (百会), Yintang (印堂), Renzhong (人中), Hegu (合谷), and Dazhui (大椎), applying external Qi to guide the disordered Qi back to the elixir along the conception vessel.

In addition to all the methods for Qigong deviation introduced above, Chinese herbs, Western medication, acupuncture, moxibustion, and massage, either singly or combined, are applicable, depending on individual conditions. Chinese herbal treatment is based on the degree and type of deviation. For example, according to *Zhang's Treatise on General Medicine* (张氏医通),[4] written in the Qing dynasty, if the method of eliminating phlegm, calming the heart spirit, and clearing fire fails, King Pills for Nourishing the Heart (Tianwang Buxin Dan, 天王补心丹) will be the second choice. And the routine management of psychosis is applicable from the Western medicine approach.

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CHAPTER 6

Selected Qigong Forms

This chapter introduces representative forms from the various traditional schools, as well as popular and influential modern forms with proven clinical effectiveness. It is hoped that students will be able to glimpse its richness from this small sample.

1. Five-Animal Frolics (五禽戏)

The Five-Animal Frolics (Figure 6.1) is a form of Daoyin exercise that mainly consists of physical exercises, but also incorporates breathing and visualization. It is a Qigong form based on the movements of five species of animals: the tiger, deer, bear, ape, and bird. It is said to have been created by the famous late Han dynasty physician Hua Tuo (华佗) and his disciple Wu Pu (吴普).

The term "five-animal play" first appears in *History of the Later Han Dynasty* or *Hou Han Shu* (后汉书), *Fangshu Liezhuan* (Biographies of Adepts),[1] where it says:

> Hua Tuo said to Pu, "The human body needs physical labor and movement but not to the extreme. Movement aids digestion and activates blood circulation. Thus it can prevent disease, just as a door hinge does not rot. Ancient immortals practiced 'bear-hanging' and 'turning the head like an owl' to stretch and relax the waist, body and joints in pursuit of longevity. I have a technique called the Five-Animal Frolics, based on the tiger, deer, bear, ape, and bird. This practice cures illness, benefits the limbs, and circulates the Qi. When feeling ill, pick one animal movement for practice. Breaking a sweat results in a rosy complexion, agile body, and good appetite." Pu practiced the routine and had sharp eyes and ears, and a complete set of teeth into his nineties.

From this we know that, for almost two thousand years, the Five-Animal Frolics has been recognized as a pioneer form of Qigong, and an effective Daoyin

Qigong form for fitness and disease prevention. The complete practice form of the Five-Animal Frolics was first seen in *Records of Cultivating Mind and Prolonging Life* or *Yang Xing Yan Ming Lu* (养性延命录) by Tao Hong Jing (陶弘景) in the Southern and Northern dynasties.[2]

Figure 6.1 Five-Animal Frolics is a Qigong form based on the movements of five species of animal: tiger, deer, bear, ape, and bird. It is said to have been created by the famous late Han dynasty physician Hua Tuo (华佗) and his disciple Wu Pu (吴普)

There are several versions of the story of how the Five-Animal Frolics became popular. Some scholars believe that it was lost before the Han and Wei dynasties and that the various extant versions were created in later ages and are not the original form invented by Hua Tuo. There are others who believe that the ancient style was never lost but was handed down and practiced secretly. Most scholars, however, subscribe to the former view.

Though all versions of the Five-Animal Frolics created in later ages inherited Hua Tuo's principles, each has its own characteristics. In general, some emphasize imitation of the animal's movements and some internal development, that is, some emphasize external training and some cultivating stillness in the midst of movement. Some emphasize brute force, and some graceful movement. Some emphasize curing illness and promoting health, and some emphasize strength and fitness. However, all involve the combination of external motion with internal tranquility, and the hard with the graceful, so as to attain tranquility in motion. Through consistent practice it can circulate the blood and Qi, strengthen the body, eliminate illness, and promote longevity.

I. Practice Method

This is a contemporary version of the Five-Animal Frolics. Since the Five-Animal Frolics was created in imitation of the postures and movements of the bear, tiger, ape, deer, and bird, practitioners should express the individual natures of these animals, such as the stubbornness of the bear, the ferocity of the tiger, the dexterity of the ape, the tranquility of the deer, and the tenderness of the bird. In addition, when practicing, coordinate the movements with the breathing and the mind.

A. Bear Frolics

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand naturally with the feet shoulder-width apart and let the arms hang naturally at your sides. Look straight ahead, focus the mind, and compose the Qi.

2. The Movement

Shift the weight to the right side, bend the right knee, and draw the left foot against the inside of the right one, with the tip of the left foot touching the floor. With the left foot, take a step forward and to the left, making contact first with the heel. Now shift the center of gravity onto the left foot to form a bow and arrow stance, bending the left knee forward like a bow. Sink the left shoulder and sway from right to left two times. Now shift the center of gravity back onto the right leg and draw the left foot back. Lift the right foot with its tip against the inner side of the left one and take one step forward to continue the movement in the opposite direction.

Repeat the movement six times alternately. If the practice area is large enough, this style can be done in a walking form. While practicing, imagine yourself walking like a bear, and coordinate the movement with deep, long breaths.

Note: When practicing, mimic the characteristics of the bear. The bear appears to be very clumsy, and you should express the qualities of simplemindedness and stability. For this reason, your movements should be slow and not rushed. In swaying the shoulders, try to engage the other joints, such as the elbow, wrist, hip, knee, and ankle. Even the internal organs should be involved in the training. Meanwhile, thoroughly relax, and make the breath even and soft.

This exercise serves to calm the liver Qi, strengthen the spleen, stomach, liver, and kidney, and improve the movement of the limbs and joints. It is applicable to cases of Qi stagnation due to spleen vacuity, chronic gastritis, high blood

pressure, peptic ulceration, constipation, gastroptosis, and lumbar pain due to kidney vacuity.

B. Tiger Frolics

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand relaxed and quiet, with feet parallel and arms hanging naturally. Look straight ahead.

2. Left Movement

1. Squat and shift the center of gravity to the right leg. The sole of the left foot, bearing no weight, touches the right ankle. Meanwhile, form fists and place on the two sides of the waist, with palms facing up. Look at the left front side.
2. With the left foot, step out diagonally toward the left front corner and move the right foot half a step in the same direction. Shift the center of gravity onto the right leg, with the left sole empty and just touching the ground. Lift the two fists along the anterior midline, with palms facing the rear. At chest level, open the fists and push forward with the palms, eyes focused on the left hand.

3. Right Movement

1. Take a half step forward with the left foot and move the right foot up to join it at the left ankle. Shift the center of gravity to the left foot and suspend the right leg, weightless and just touching the ground. Meanwhile, form the hands into fists and withdraw them to the sides of the waist, with palms facing up. Focus the vision on the right front corner.
2. Practice the movements described in the second phase above, but simply reverse them for the right side. Repeat the movements alternately several times.

Note: Keep the body stable when stepping out or drawing the foot back. Push the hands out in a firm but gentle and flexible manner. Through such training, one may gradually be able to push the hands out with internal force.

This exercise trains both the external structure and internal Qi, and thus benefits the essence, Qi, spirit, sinews, bones, and marrow. In addition, it improves the lung Qi, benefits the kidney, regulates the central nervous system, and is very effective in preventing and treating neurasthenia and bronchitis.

C. Ape Frolics

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand with heels together and toes apart. Let the arms hang naturally at your sides and look straight ahead.

2. Left Movement

1. Bend the legs and step forward very lightly with the left foot. At the same time, raise the left hand to mouth level and then extend it as if reaching for something. When the arm is fully extended, bring the fingers together to form a "hook hand," with the wrist hanging naturally.
2. Advance the right foot very lightly and bring the left foot up to join it at the ankle, without weight and just touching the floor. At the same time, raise the right hand to mouth level, and then extend it as if reaching for something. When the arm is fully extended, form the hand into a hook. Now, withdraw the left hand, forming a paw, and withdrawing it to the left flank.
3. Pull the left foot back and draw the right foot to join it at the left ankle, with the right sole weightless and just touching the ground. At the same time, raise the left hand to mouth level, and then extend it as if reaching for something. When the arm is fully extended, form a "hook hand" and withdraw the right hand to the flank.

3. Left movement

Practice the same movements on the opposite side.

Note: This exercise is intended to develop physical agility by mimicking the movements of primates. During practice, move the limbs lightly and nimbly, preserving whole body coordination, and embodying the mannerisms of apes. Practice it repeatedly.

This exercise has the function of securing and absorbing kidney Qi, activating the Qi and blood, and facilitating the movement of the joints. It regulates the nervous system and promotes its coordinating functions. Thus it can treat neurosis, diarrhea, constipation, and osteoarthritis.

D. Deer Frolics

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand naturally and let the arms hang relaxed at your sides. Look straight ahead.

2. Left Movement

1. Bend the right knee and sit back. Step forward with the left foot, knee slightly bent, and sole just touching the floor. Extend the left hand with the elbow slightly bent and palm facing right. Place the right hand against the inner part of the left elbow, with the right palm facing left.
2. Circle both arms counterclockwise, the left one in a bigger circle than the right. At the same time, rotate the waist, hips, and coccyx counterclockwise. Later, try to propel the arms by the action of the waist, hips, and coccyx alone.

3. Right Movement

Perform the same movements on the opposite side.

Note: Movements in this section are gentle and slow, reflecting the mild and tender nature of the deer. Practice slowly and gently. Stretch the body so the spine is fully stretched and exercised.

This style stretches and exercises the spine to stretch the sinews and channels and opens the govenor vessel. Moreover, it massages the viscera to strengthen the stomach Qi and promote gastrointestinal peristalsis, and thus has a remarkable effect on chronic diarrhea, constipation, prostate diseases, heart diseases, and chronic bronchitis.

E. Bird Frolics

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand with feet parallel and let the arms hang naturally at your sides. Look straight ahead.

2. Left Movement

1. Take a step forward with the left foot, and then a half step with the right foot, toes just touching the ground. At the same time raise the arms slowly in front of the body, with palms facing upward. When they reach shoulder level, open the arms to the left and right while taking a deep breath.
2. Move the right foot beside the left and lower the arms to your sides, with palms facing downward. While exhaling, squat and cross the arms beneath the knees, with palms facing upward.

3. Right Movement

Practice the movements on the opposite side.

Note: This section mimics the movements of a bird in flight; thus the exercise should express the idea of a bird spreading its wings and soaring high above the clouds. During practice, relax the shoulders and arms and move the body gently, coordinating the physical movements with the breathing.

This form can calm the liver Qi, nourish the blood, maintain clear Qi and eliminate turbid Qi, and regulate the heart, lung, spleen, and stomach. Indications for it are high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, anxiety, and cholecystitis.

While practicing the Five-Animal Frolics, relax and hold the mind in the Dantian. Breathe evenly and softly to unify the body and spirit. When practicing the bear, you should present its nature, which though ponderous is light on its feet and courageous. When practicing the tiger, you should embody its awesome and ferocious bearing, hardness within softness, and softness within hardness. When practicing the ape, you should express its agility and liveliness. When practicing the deer, you should embody the quiet and tender nature of the deer through gentle movements. When practicing the bird, you should express its ability to soar through the air. In this way, you can unite the body and spirit of each animal.

II. Application

The Five-Animal Frolics has enjoyed a long history and is esteemed as a typical, traditional Chinese Daoyin practice. By mimicking the postures, movements, and bearing of the animals, along with their corresponding attitudes, practitioners will experience opening of the channels and network vessels, strengthening of the internal organs, and activation of the joints. This form harmonizes firmness and softness in its design by embodying the fierceness of the tiger, the gentleness of the bird, and the agility of the ape. Thus, it is suitable for healthy people as well as those with chronic diseases of the nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, locomotive, and digestive system. Patients with Qi stagnation due to spleen vacuity, chronic gastritis, peptic ulceration, high blood pressure, constipation, chronic bronchitis, arthritis, and prostate enlargement may have their symptoms alleviated after long practice.

This style may be practiced in its entirety, or learners may choose specific sections to practice. The intensity and duration are also not fixed, making this quite a flexible exercise. It is best to practice until the body warms up and moderate sweating occurs.

2. The Six Syllable Formula (六字诀)

The Six Syllable Formula is an ancient health practice and breathing exercise (Tu-Na 吐纳). Because the essence of the practice is vocalizing six different sounds while exhaling the breath, it is referred to as the "Six Syllable Formula Health Practice." The syllable SI (嘶) corresponds to the lung and Metal; CHUI (吹) corresponds to the kidney and Water; XU (嘘) corresponds to the liver and Wood; HE (呵) corresponds to the heart and Fire; HU (呼) corresponds to the spleen and Earth; and XI (嘻) corresponds to the triple energizers (Sanjiao, 三焦).

The earliest record of this technique is found in *The Book of Documents* or *Shang Shu* (尚书).[3] In the *Records of Cultivating Mind and Prolonging Life* or *Yang Xing Yan Ming Lu* (养性延命录),[2] Tao Hong Jing of the South and North dynasties writes: "There is one way to inhale and six to exhale. These six include: CHUI, HU, XI, HE, XU, and SI." Since the Sui dynasty, each generation has contributed to the literature on this technique, such as Sun Simiao's *Essential Golden Prescriptions* or *Qian Jin Yao Fang* (千金要方), Wang Ang's *Collected Exegesis of Recipes* or *Yi Fang Ji Jie* (医方集解), Gong Tingan's *Longevity and Preserving Original Qi* or *Shou Shi Bao Yuan* (寿世保元), and Ming dynasty Leng Qian's *Essentials of Attaining Longevity* or *Xiu Ling Yao Zhi* (修龄要旨). Various six-syllable mnemonic devices have been created throughout the ages.

In his *Essentials of Attaining Longevity* or *Xiu Ling Yao Zhi*,[4] Leng Qian composed a verse matching the six sounds with the five organs and four seasons.

> Practicing XU in spring brightens the eyes and supports the liver;
> Practicing HE in summer reduces Fire in the heart;
> SI in winter settles and moistens the lung;
> CHUI brings tranquility to the kidney;
> XI clears heat and restlessness from the triple energizers;
> HU strengthens the spleen in all four seasons.
> Pronouncing them silently,
> Far exceeds any elixir of immortality.

The Six Syllable Formula is based on Traditional Chinese Medical theories of Yin and Yang, the five phases, the unity of man and nature, and engendering and restraining. The Six Syllable Formula correlates the sequence of the four seasons with the attributes of the five viscera (liver, heart, spleen, lung, and kidney). It uses the shape of the mouth in the pronunciation of the five musical tones (Jiao, Zhi, Gong, Shang, and Yu) to correlate with the movements of the breath, mind, and body. The earthy Qi ascends, and the heavenly Qi descends; the old is expelled, and the new is inhaled. Merging with the postnatal constructive

and defensive Qi, they activate the genuine source (Zhenyuan), promote Qi and blood circulation throughout the internal organs to remove stasis and stagnation, eliminate toxin and binding, regulate vacuity and depletion, rebuild and rejuvenate, improve physical and mental health, and lead to the attainment of longevity. The Six Syllable Formula can be used to treat diseases caused by dysfunction of the internal organs.

I. Practice Method

A. Preparatory Posture

Stand with the feet shoulder-width apart, keeping the head and neck erect, with the Baihui (GV-20) pointing straight upward. Focus inwardly on the lower abdomen, with the mouth lightly closed, and the tongue pressed against the upper palate. Sink the shoulders and elbows, with the arms naturally hanging at the sides. Draw in the chest, straighten the back, relax the waist, lower the hips, slightly bend the knees, and completely relax. Keep the mind clear, while breathing naturally and calmly. Avoid force and effort. One should enjoy the serene state of empty mind, tranquil heart, erect posture, and relaxed body.

The vocalization of each sound is preceded by this preparatory posture. Start the practice when you feel relaxed and calm, and the Qi and blood are circulating smoothly.

Breathing maneuver: Breathe naturally and start with exhalation. Gradually change to abdominal breathing when the breathing is even and subtle. Slightly close the lips, press the tongue against the upper palate, descend the diaphragm, and distend the abdomen while inhaling, thus allowing the air to go deeper into the abdomen. Relax the muscles of the entire body and calm the mind. When articulating a sound, tighten the anus and perineum, and contract the muscles of the abdomen and buttocks, ascend the diaphragm, and shift the center of gravity to the heels with the toes slightly touching the floor while exhaling, and lead the Earth-Qi upward from the related Jing-Well point. At the end of the exhalation, the abdomen turns naturally flat. Do not focus the mind on breathing. Otherwise, the Qi goes down with difficulty; it may accumulate in the head causing dizziness, or accumulate in the chest inducing stuffiness. Breathing naturally without special attention can empty the mind, relax the muscles, and guide the Qi downward. This is the breathing method for Six Syllable breathing.

It is necessary to regulate the breathing after repeating six times the articulation of each sound. The procedures are as follows. Slowly raise both arms from the sides of the body with palms facing downward. Turn the palms upward when the wrists are at the level of the shoulders. Rotate the arms and

flex the elbows with palms facing each other. Do not let the palms rise higher than the eyebrows. Close the two palms from each side to the midline of the body. When the two palms are closed, turn the palms downward with the fingers facing each other. Do all the above movements while inhaling. Move the arms downward slowly from the front of the chest to the abdomen like pressing a ball while exhaling, then let both arms naturally down to return to the preparatory posture.

Four aspects of articulating, mouth movement, body movement, and meridian flow should be emphasized during the performance of Six Syllable Formula. Their relationships to the three adjustments are: articulating and mouth movement relates to breath adjustment; the body movement relates to body adjustment; and keeping the mind on meridian flow relates to mind adjustment.

B. The XU Sound Calms the Qi of the Liver

Vocalization: XU

Mouth shape: The lips are lightly pressed together with horizontal tension. The tip of the tongue extends forward and is slightly curled back, with the two edges curled slightly toward the center. With teeth slightly apart, exhale.

Note: The XU sound is a dental sibilant. While pronouncing XU, draw the corners of the mouth backward and keep the upper and lower premolars in line, with a slight gap in between. There should also be a gap between the premolars and the sides of the tongue. Exhale through the gap blowing the air out.

Movement: Inhale naturally. While exhaling, press the big toe lightly against the floor. With the backs of the hands facing each other, raise the two arms from the Daimai point (GB-26), passing by the Zhangmen (LV-13) and Qimen (LR-14) all the way to the Zhongfu (LU-1) and Yunmen (LU-2) points on the lung channel. Open the two arms like a bird spreading its wings, with the two palms opening upwards and outwards and eyes focused inwardly. As you raise the arms, start to exhale and vocalize the syllable XU, while keeping the eyes open as wide as possible. After exhaling, relax and inhale naturally. Bend the arms and drop the hands slowly, passing by the face, chest, and belly. Breathe naturally and rest for a moment before performing the second round (the same is true for the following exercises). Six of such repetitions constitute one set, followed by breath regulation and returning to the preparatory posture.

Channel flow: The mind guides the liver Qi to travel upward from the Dadun point (LV-1) on the lateral aspect of the big toe across the dorsa of the feet, passing through the Taichong (LV-3) and Zhongdu (LV-5) points to reach the medial aspect of the knees. After rising up the medial aspect of the legs and

encircling the genitals, it arrives at the lower abdomen, traverses both sides of the stomach, and links up with the liver and gallbladder. It continues moving upward, penetrating the diaphragm and spreading into the hypochondriac region. One branch proceeds upward behind the throat to the upper orifice of the skull, connecting the network vessels of the eye and brain, and emerges at the forehead to meet the govenor vessel in the brain at the point known as the Mud Ball Palace (GV-20). The other branch, proceeding from the liver, ascends to the lung after passing through the diaphragm. Then passing through the Zhongfu (LU-1) and Yunmen (LU-2) points, it continues along the medial aspect of the arm and ends at the Shaoshang point (LU-11) on the medial aspect of the thumb. After practicing the XU sound for a long time, a sensation of Qi may be felt in the eyes, and one may begin to feel tension. Some people experience a stabbing pain, tearing or numbness in the eyes, or tension at the Shaoshang point (LU-11). Gradually the eyes will become bright and vision will improve.

The XU sound can treat eye diseases and relieve symptoms, such as hyperactivity of liver Fire, liver vacuity, hepatomegaly, poor appetite, indigestion, dryness of eyes, and vertigo.

C. The HE Sound Supplements the Qi of the Heart

Vocalization: HE

Mouth shape: With the mouth half-open and tip of the tongue touching the lower palate, the cheeks are pulled back with some force, while the sides of the tongue rest against the lower teeth.

Note: The HE sound is lingual. While pronouncing HE, raise the tongue, with the edges lightly resting against the upper premolar teeth. The breath is slowly exhaled through the gap between the upper palate and the tongue.

Movement: Inhale naturally and exhale while pronouncing the syllable HE, with the big toe slightly touching the floor. Raise both hands from the Chongmen point (SP-12) at the hip bone along the spleen channel with palms facing inward. Now turn the palms upwards at the Danzhong point (CV-17) in the center of the sternum and raise them up to the eyes. At the end of each exhalation, turn the palms inward and move them downward, passing in front of the face, chest, and abdomen. Then, return the hands slowly to both sides. After a short rest, repeat the movement for a total of six times for one set. Normalize your breathing and resume the preparatory posture.

Channel flow: Leading with the mind, the Qi ascends from the spleen channel along the medial aspect of the thigh, entering the abdomen, and continuing upward through the spleen, stomach, and diaphragm to enter the heart. The

two branches ascend bilaterally to the throat, connecting with the tongue, entering the eyes and finally reaching the brain. The direct branch ascends from the heart to the lung and then emerges transversely from the armpit, arriving at the Jiquan point (HT-1), the first point on the heart channel. It then runs along the posterior edge of the inner part of the arm, passing by the Shaohai (HT-3), Shenmen (HT-7), and Shaofu (HT-8) points and ending at Shaochong (HT-9) at the tip of the little finger. Therefore, when practicing the HE sound, there may be a slight feeling of numbness or tightness in the tips of the little and middle fingers. The heart channel and related organs may also have a reaction.

This practice of the HE sound may aid in the treatment of palpitations, angina pectoris, insomnia, forgetfulness, profuse sweating, tongue erosion, stiff tongue, aphasia, etc.

D. The HU Sound Banks Up the Qi of the Spleen

Vocalization: HU

Mouth shape: Shape the mouth as if forming a tube, with the lips rounded. With the tongue slightly curled, extend it as far forward as possible, leading the Qi of the thoroughfare vessel to ascend and be expelled from the mouth.

Note: The sound HU is laryngeal. As you pronounce the syllable while exhaling, curl the edge of the tongue upwards and purse the lips into a round shape. As the air is exhaled from the pharynx, it forms a current in the oral cavity that is expelled through the tightened lips.

Movement: Inhale naturally, vocalizing the sound HU as you exhale. The big toes should lightly touch the floor. Starting at the Chongmen point (SP-12) at the hip bone, raise the hands until they reach the Zhangmen point (LV-14) at the sides of the abdomen, then the hands turn over, palms facing up. Turn the left hand outward and lift it above the head, being careful to keep the shoulders dropped. At the same time, turn the right hand inward and press it downward to the Chongmen point (SP-12). At the end of the exhalation, as you begin to inhale, turn the left arm inward and move it downward in front of the face, with the left palm facing in. At the same time, the right arm thrusts upward with the palm turned inward until the two hands are placed one on top of the other, left hand on the outside and right on the inside in front of the chest. Turn both hands inward as they press downward passing the abdomen and come to rest at the sides of the body. After a short rest, reverse the process, with the right hand ascending and the left one descending. Repeat the movement six times for one set. Normalize your breathing and resume the preparatory posture.

Channel flow: Vocalize the HU sound while exhaling, with the big toes firmly pressing the floor. Leading the channel Qi with the mind, it rises from the

Yinbai point (SP-1) along the red-white line of the big toe, the spleen meridian, passing through Dadu (SP-2), Taibai (SP-3), and Gongsun (SP-4) points. Continuing along the medial aspect of the foot, the Qi arrives at the Sanyinjiao point (SP-6), 3 cun above the medial malleolus of the tibia. Moving on through the Xuehai (SP-10) and Qimen (SP-11) points on the medial aspect of the knee and thigh, the Qi passes through the Chongmen (SP-12) and Fushe (SP-13) points and enters the abdomen along the spleen channel and connecting with the stomach. From the spleen and stomach, it continues bilaterally up through the throat, making its way to the root of the tongue and spreading out beneath it. Continuing, the channel Qi reunites in the heart, finally reaching the Shaochong point (HT-9) at the tip of the little finger, as the arm rises. This explains why, when vocalizing the syllable HU, the Qi sensation is similar to HE.

This practice of the HU sound may aid in the treatment of spleen vacuity, diarrhea, abdominal distension, edema, muscle atrophy, disharmony of spleen and stomach, indigestion, poor appetite, hematochezia, irregular menstruation, and fatigue.

E. The SI Sound Supplements the Qi of the Lung

Vocalization: SI

Mouth shape: The lips are slightly drawn backward. Keep the upper and lower teeth opposite each other, and place the tip of the tongue in the spaces between them. Pronounce the sound through the gap between the teeth.

Note: The sound SI is a dental sibilant. Pronounce SI while exhaling, keeping the upper and lower teeth opposite each other, with a gap between. Lightly press the tip of the tongue against the lower teeth, so the air may exit through the gap.

Movement: Inhale naturally. Raising both hands from the Jimai point (LV-12) in the groin, turn the palms gradually upwards after passing the abdomen. At the Danzhong point (CV-17) in the center of the chest, the arms turn outward with the palms facing out in standing palm position. The finger tips are at the level of the throat. Now open the two arms wide to expand the chest, pushing the palms outward like a bird spreading its wings. Pronounce the sound XU while exhaling, with the big toe lightly touching the ground. At the end of the exhalation, move both arms downward naturally with the inhalation. Repeat the movement six times for one set. Adjust the breathing and resume the preparatory posture.

Channel flow: While vocalizing the SI sound, the mind leads the Qi of the liver channel up from the Dadun point (LV-1) at the lateral border of the big

toe, along the medial aspect of the leg, all the way to the liver. Branching from the liver, it flows into the lungs, then emerges from the conjunction of the lung and the throat and moves transversely, passing through the Zhongfu (LU-1), Yunmen (LU-2), Taiyuan (LU-8), and Yuji (LU-10) points, and ending at Shaoshang (LU-11) at the tip of the thumb. Practitioners may experience a sensation of Qi, especially at the thumb and index fingers when opening both arms.

This SI sound practice method may aid in the treatment of the common cold, fever and cough, phlegm accumulation, backache, aversion to cold, shortness of breath, frequent scanty urine, etc.

F. The CHUI Sound Reinforces the Qi of the Kidney

Vocalization: CHUI

Mouth shape: With the mouth slightly open, draw the corners of the mouth slightly back. Curl the tongue upwards and draw it slightly back.

Note: The sound CHUI is labial. As you exhale while pronouncing the sound CHUI, draw the tongue and corners of the mouth back, keeping the upper and lower premolar teeth in line with each other and lips tensed. The air is expelled from the throat, passing by the edge of the tongue, and then exits from the gap between the lips.

Movement: Inhale naturally and pronounce CHUI while exhaling. Lift the arms from the sides, passing by the Changqiang (GV-1) and Shenshu (BL-23) points moving forward in an arc, and then along the kidney meridian to the Shufu point (KI-27). Keep the arms rounded as if holding a ball, with the fingertips of one hand facing the other. Now let the body drop into a squatting position, as the arms also descend. Place the arms on the knees at the end of the exhalation. While pronouncing CHUI, the toes should firmly grasp the ground, and the feet should be arched, as if walking in mud, in order to conduct the kidney Qi upward from the arch. Maintain an upright posture while squatting and lower the body until the anal sphincter can no longer be tightened. After thoroughly exhaling, stand up gradually with the inhalation, and return the arms to the sides. After a short rest repeat the same movement six times, and then adjust the breathing and resume the preparatory posture.

Channel flow: While pronouncing the CHUI sound, shift the weight to the heels and lead the kidney Qi upward with the mind from the Yongquan point (KI-1) in the heart of the sole, along the kidney meridian, the medial aspect of the sole and ankle, following the ankle bone backward and passing through the Sanyinjiao point (SP-6) through the back of the knee and inner thigh. Then following the medial aspect of the upper leg and thighs, it travels to the rear

to enter the Changqiang point (GV-1), the spine, and kidney, connecting with the urinary bladder. A branch of the channel runs upward to join the liver and penetrates the diaphragm to enter the lung. It continues moving upward along the throat and reaches the root of the tongue. One branch exits the lung to enter the heart, connecting with the pericardium channel. It passes through the Tianchi (PC-1), Quze (PC-3), Daling (PC-7), and Laogong (PC-8) points, and ends at Zhongchong (PC-9) at the tip of the middle finger. During the practice of CHUI, a strong Qi sensation may be felt at the palm and middle finger.

This CHUI sound exercise may aid in the treatment of weakness or pain in the loin and legs, dry eyes, forgetfulness, tidal fever, night sweating, vertigo, and tinnitus in general, spermatorrhea, impotence, and premature ejaculation in men, and dream intercourse, cold womb, and teeth or hair loss in women.

G. The XI Sound Regulates the Triple Energizers

Vocalization: XI

Mouth shape: Slightly part and tighten the lips, but without the intent of closing or separating them. The tongue is slightly extended, but the inner intention is retraction, with the tip pointed downwards. Your expression should be one of cheerfulness and ease.

Note: XI is a dental sibilant. While pronouncing XI, lay the tip of the tongue against the lower teeth, draw the corners of the mouth back and upward, and lightly grind the upper and lower premolars together. Blow air out from the gap outside the molar edge.

Movement: Pronounce the syllable XI while exhaling. The fourth and fifth toes should touch the floor. As if holding an object, lift the two arms from the edge of the pubic bones, past the abdomen to the level of the Danzhong point (CV-17). Turn the arms outwards, palms facing forward, and raise them over the vertex. Turn both palms upward, with the fingers pointing at each other. While inhaling, turn both arms inward and lower them along the gallbladder channel with fingers apart. The thumb passes by Fengchi (GB-20), and the other four fingers pass by the side of the head, the hypochondriac region, and Yuanye (GB-22). At the same time, mentally guide the Qi to the Zuqiaoyin point (GB-44) at the end of the fourth toe. Repeat the movement six times, adjust the breathing, and then resume the preparatory posture.

Channel flow: While pronouncing the XI sound, mentally guide the Qi upwards from the Zuqiaoyin (GB-44) and Zhiyin (BL-67) points to enter the urinary bladder channel, and then up the lower abdomen to connect the lower, middle, and upper Jiao. After flowing into the pericardium channel in the chest, guide the Qi through the Tianchi (PC-1), Tianquan (PC-2), Quze (PC-3), Daling (PC-7),

and Laogong (PC-8) points and finally into the triple energizers channel. While inhaling, guide the Qi upward from the Guanchong point (TB-1) at the tip of the fourth finger along the lateral aspect of the arm to the elbow, shoulder, Jianjing (GB-21), and Quepen (ST-12) at the upper fossa of the clavicle and finally reaching the chest and joining the triple energizers. One branch ascends, passing in front of the ear, and it emerges by the side of the forehead; it goes down to the cheek, ultimately descending into the gallbladder channel, and then via the Fengchi (GB-20), Yuanye (GB-22), Riyue (GB-24), and Huantiao (GB-30) points to reach the Zuqiaoyin point (GB-44). In short, use the mind to direct the Qi first upward and then downward again to return to the gallbladder.

While practicing the XI sound, a strong Qi sensation is felt in the ring finger as one exhales and in the fourth toe when moving the arms downward. This is because the Shaoyang Qi ascends on exhalation to join the Chongmai, which then permeates the entire body and promotes the circulation of the viscera and bowel Qi and blood.

This XI sound exercise may aid in the treatment of conditions caused by the unsmooth flow of the triple energizer meridian, such as tinnitus, vertigo, sore throat, stiffness in the chest, abdominal distension, urinary disorders, etc.

II. Application

Based on Traditional Chinese Medicine's holistic theory of treatment, along with the principle of the interaction of the five phases, a complete course of the Six Syllable Formula includes pronouncing each sound six times: three times in the morning and three times in the evening. A total of 36 times completes what is known as a microcosmic orbit. If any organ is diseased, increase the repetition of the corresponding sound 1–3 times, but be sure not to practice only the same sound repeatedly to avoid discomfort. Adding the corresponding sound practice can be performed either before or after the complete course of practice combined with the six-time breathing.

The Six Syllable Formula is effective in draining repletion, and is therefore effective in addressing repletion syndromes of the internal organs. While intoning the sound, prolong the duration of exhalation for better results. For example, patients with high blood pressure normally present with ascendant hyperactivity of liver Yang. As you slowly breathe out, prolong the exhalation and relax the whole body, while at the same time silently pronouncing the syllable XU. This calms the liver Fire, eliminates dizziness and headache, and lowers blood pressure.

The Six Syllable Formula has broad therapeutic applications. The HE sound for the heart Qi may address restlessness, ulcers of the tongue and mouth, and heat syndromes. The sound HU for the spleen may address heat conditions due to dampness and phlegm accumulation, diarrhea, dysentery, rumbling intestines,

and vomiting of Water. The SI sound for lung Qi addresses coughs, phlegm accumulation, vexation and agitation in the chest and diaphragm, and dryness of the tongue and throat. The XU sound for the liver Qi addresses liver Fire and red and teary eyes. The CHUI sound for kidney Qi is able to treat frowning, tinnitus, darkening of the complexion, and thinness. The XI sound for the triple energizers is used to eliminate Fire in the triple energizers.

For vacuity patterns in the viscera and bowels, according to the principle of the mutual engendering and restraining of the five phases, draining can actually be used to supplement. For example, if the lung Qi is vacuous, increase the repetition of HE, since Fire restrains Metal; thus draining that which restrains Metal has the effect of strengthening Metal.

3. Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic (易筋经)

The *Yijin Jing* (*Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic*) is one of the dynamic Qigong forms. It emphasizes the training of posture, breath, and mind. The practice is based on the circulation of the 12 acupuncture channels and the controlling and governing vessels. During practice, Qi flows freely throughout the body, neither too fast nor too slowly, making it one of the most esteemed among the Qigong forms. Legend has it that the *Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic* was created by an Indian Buddhist monk, Bodhidharma, in the 19th year of the Northern Wei dynasty (527 CE). Before the Song dynasty, the form was taught only among Buddhists in the Shaolin Temple, and it was not until the Ming and Qing dynasties that it became increasingly popular and eventually developed into several styles. In Chinese, it is called *Yijin Jing*. *Yi* means to change, *Jin* refers to the sinews and muscles, and *Jing* means standard method. Thus, as the name implies, the *Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic* is a method for changing the body's sinews and muscles through specific training.

I. Practice Method

A. Skanda, the Guardian Bodhisattva, Offers a Pestle

[Formula:]

Stand upright, perfectly erect.
Hold the arms out in a circle in front of the chest.
As the Qi settles, the mind becomes calm.
With a pure heart, the face beams reverently.

1. Posture

1. The left foot takes one step sideways to the left with feet shoulder-width apart. Relax the arms naturally at the sides of the body. Keep the head erect, with eyes half-closed and looking straight ahead. Press the tongue against the upper palate. Relax the shoulders, sink the elbows, draw in the chest, straighten the back, contract the abdomen, and release the hip joints. Relax the knee joints, so that they are slightly flexed, and lay the sole of the foot flat on the floor. Relax the whole body and breathe naturally, with the heart clear as a mirror and the mind focused within.
2. Form the hands into Yin-palm and slowly raise them (palms facing down) to shoulder level. Change to Yin-Yang palm and move them toward the chest, with the palms facing each other and elbows slowly bending. The two thumbs should touch at the Shaoshang points (LU-11). Press the palms and ten fingers together in front of the chest, with fingers pointing upward. Relax the shoulders, and sink the elbows.

Note: Lift the hands to shoulder level, with palms facing downwards and fingers pointing outward (known as Yin-palm). Flex the wrist and turn the fingers upward into Yin-Yang palm.

2. Breath and Intention

Breathe naturally when practicing the first style, and use abdominal breathing and gather Qi in the Dantian when practicing the second. After the flow of internal Qi is felt, your mind should follow the breath, and as you inhale, guide it from the fingertips to enter through the nose and sink to the Dantian. Now as you inhale, the Qi rises from the Dantian to the chest and follows the three Yin channels of the arm to the palms and fingers.

B. Shouldering a Demon-Defeating Pestle

[Formula:]

Toes touch the floor,
And hands open at chest level.
With a peaceful mind and calm Qi,
Stand impassively staring straight ahead.

1. Posture

Continuing from the preceding posture, slowly change to Yin-palm (palms facing down) and open the hands to the sides, so that the elbows, shoulders, and wrists are all aligned on one level. At the same time, lift the heels slightly,

leaving only the tips of the toes touching the floor (experienced practitioners may use only the big toe as support). Focus your attention straight ahead, hollow the chest and straighten the back, contract the abdomen, relax the hips, and press the tongue against the upper palate.

Note: When the heels are lifted, the tips of the toes are responsible for keeping the body in balance. Hence, it is best to separate the toes before lifting the heels.

2. Breath and Intention

Breathe naturally and focus the mind on the Laogong point (PC-8) in the palm and toes. Experienced practitioners may adopt abdominal breathing and focus on the Laogong point, while inhaling, and Dadun (LV-1), while exhaling.

C. Palms Support the Gate of Heaven

[Formula:]

Gaze upward as palms support the Gate of Heaven.
Grasp the ground with the toes and straighten the body.
Hold the upper body, legs, and sides as upright as a plant.
Clench the teeth together and lock the jaw.
Press the tongue against the upper palate to increase saliva.
Breathe through the nose to calm the heart.
Slowly retract the fists to their original position.
Use force as if bearing a heavy load.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the previous posture, slowly lift the hands and circle them up while changing Yin-palm to Yang-palm, with the palm facing up and fingertips facing each other above the head, as if supporting the heaven (2 inches superior to the anterior hairline). At the same time, lift both heels and part them slightly, with toes touching the ground. Close the Yin storeroom point (Huiyin, CV-1) at the perineum and open the Huiyang (BL-35) on the urinary bladder channel at the level of the end of the coccyx. Clench the teeth together, with the tongue against the upper palate. Focus the vision inwardly, gazing through the gate of heaven between the two hands.
2. Clench the fists and slowly lower the arms along the ascending route to resume the posture Shouldering a Demon-Defeating Pestle.

2. Breath and Intention

Start by inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth, then inhale and exhale through the nose. Gather Qi in the Dantian and keep breathing fine, even, long, slow, and continuous. While inhaling, focus the mind in the Dantian, and while exhaling, slowly shift the focus to the space between the palms. When the Qi flow is felt, let the mind follow its circulation.

D. Plucking Stars and Then the Dipper

[Formula:]

Single handedly uphold heaven with palm overhead.
Eyes focus on the palm.
Inhaling through the nose and exhale through the mouth.
With effort, withdraw the gaze from left and right.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, raise the right hand slowly towards the upper right side to a distance of one fist from the forehead. At the same time, lower the left hand and turn it around to rest the back of the hand on the left Yaoyan point. Focus inwardly on the right Laogong point.
2. Raise the left hand, lower the right, and rest the back of it on the right Yaoyan point. Focus inwardly on the left Laogong point.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth, with an even and steady rhythm. Focus your attention on the Laogong point of the raised hand and link it in one line of Qi with the eyes and outer Laogong of the hand pressed against the Yaoyan. The Yaoyan should contract and expand with the inhalation and exhalation of the breath.

Note: Focus on the inner Laogong when exhaling and on the outer Laogong of the hand in the lower position when inhaling. Imagine that the inner and outer Laogong points, the eyes, and Yaoyan expand and contract with the rhythm of the breath.

E. Drag Nine Ox Tails Backward

[Formula:]

Stand in a bow stance with front leg bent and rear straight.
Circulate the Qi in the abdomen, open and relaxed.

Focus the mind on the shoulders.
The hands form grappling fists, while you inwardly visualize the pupils.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, separate the right hand from the Yaoyan, allowing it to slightly drop, and then transform to Yin-palm. Now circle it up to the right front side until it is level with the shoulder. The five fingers come together to form a "grappling hand," with wrist bent, fingers pointing upward and out, and force gathered at the bottom of the sleeve. At the same time, move the right leg forward and straighten the left one behind to form a bow and arrow stance. Meanwhile, lower the left hand and circle it around backwards, forming a 15° angle with the left leg. The right hand is held at the level of the forehead.
2. Shift to a left bow and arrow stance. Meanwhile, return the left hand and circle it around to the left front side. Now withdraw the right hand and extend it toward the right rear side. The key points of the movements are the same as above.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Imagine both hands pulling together on a single line, as if dragging a cow backward by its tail. While inhaling, focus on the extended hand and pull it backwards; while exhaling, focus on the hand stretched behind and pull it forward. Use the Qi of the Dantian to propel your opening and closing movements. The body parts—legs, waist, back, shoulders, and elbows—vibrate sympathetically with the rhythm of the backward and forward pulling. Repeat the movements 3–5 times.

F. Bare Claws and Display Wings

[Formula:]

Stand erect with glaring eyes.
Open the window and gaze at the rising moon.
Flatten mountains to see the rising tide.
Repeat seven times in harmony with the breathing.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, as the front hand pulls backward, withdraw the front leg, bring the feet together, and withdraw

the hands. Set the palms upright, facing outward, to form the "pushing mountain palm" in front of the chest.

2. Slowly push the hands forward. At first, push as if opening a window, and when the shoulders, elbows, and wrists are aligned on the same level, separate the fingers with force. Keep the body upright, hold the breath, open the eyes wide, and look straight ahead without blinking. Concentrate the mind and focus on the two palms.
3. Slowly draw the hands back to the chest and repeat the movement seven times.

Note: While pushing the palms forward, slowly separate the fingers, keeping them upright until tingling and warmth is felt. Now as you draw the palms back to the chest, the fingers naturally come back together.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. While exhaling, push the hands forward in front of you to the extreme, and then hold the breath for a moment. Push lightly at first, increasing the force as you reach the end, as if attempting to flatten a mountain. Now inhale, drawing the hands back and focusing on the space between the palms.

G. Nine Ghosts Unsheathe Their Sabers

[Formula:]

Turn the head to the side and bend the forearm.
Encircle the head and pull the ear.
Open the right armpit,
And close the left tightly.
Rock the head with the right hand,
While the left presses against the shoulder blade.
Repeat on both sides,
And straighten the upper body as if climbing.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, raise the right hand forward and circle it around toward the back of the head. Rest the palm on the occiput, or "Jade Pillow Gate." Using the index, middle, and ring fingers, lightly squeeze and pull the left Tiancheng point, located at the apex of the left ear, where the helix forms. Keep the elbow and shoulder on the same level and the right armpit opened. Circle the left

hand to the left, then press the left arm and hand tightly against the scapula area.

2. Lower the right hand, turn it over, and rest it on the back of the scapula area. At the same time, lift the left hand to the occiput and rest the palm on Jade Pillow Gate. Gently pull the right ear with the left armpit open and the right closed.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale and exhale through the nose. While inhaling, concentrate on the elbow of the arm that has circled the head and is pulling the ear. The head and neck should move in response to the pulling. While exhaling, concentrate on the outer Laogong point of the hand pressing against the back and gather Qi in the Dantian. Repeat the movements six to seven times.

H. Strike the Floor Three Times

[Formula:]

Press the tongue against the upper palate.
Keep the eyes open and teeth tightly clenched.
Spread your legs and stand in horse stance.
Both hands press and grab.
Turn the palms upwards,
As if carrying a heavy load.
Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth.
Stamp the feet, but do not let them go askew.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, open the arms outward until the shoulders, elbows, and wrists are all horizontally aligned, with the palms facing downward. At the same time, take a large step sideways with the left foot, so that the two feet are about 25 cuns apart (depending on height, width may be slightly wider or narrower).

2. Slowly bend the knees into a horse stance. Now relax the chest, straighten the back, and keep the thigh and lower leg at a 90° angle. As you squat, lower the two Yin-palms and press them downward to knee level. Move slowly, steadily, and forcefully, with tongue against the palate and eyes wide open.

3. Reverse the downward pressing palms to Yang-palms, as if holding a heavy load, and raise them to chest level, while straightening the legs. Repeat the movements 3–5 times.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Press downwards while exhaling and move upwards while inhaling. Gather Qi in the Dantian and focus the mind on the two palms, as if holding a heavy load.

I. Green Dragon Searches with Claws

[Formula:]

Green dragon searches with claws,
Moving the left paw ahead of the right.
The left palm circles,
And forms a fist to rest against the flank.
Raise the right claw to uncover the Yunmen point,
While Qi circles the shoulders and back.
Twist the waist and abdomen.
Regulate the breathing to a gentle sigh,
And the tiger and dragon will be tamed.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, draw the left foot toward the right until the two feet are shoulder-width apart.
2. Turn the palms downward to form a Yin-palm "dragon searching claw" (with the last phalangeal joints bent and the palm empty and round). Rotate the waist to the rear, following the movement of the elbow. At the same time, turn the right palm down to form a Yin-palm "dragon searching claw." Following the backward movement of the left palm, forcefully move the right palm to the left, as if searching with claws. Open the left Qimen (LV-14) and Yunmen (LU-2) points and close the right. While twisting the upper body, withdraw the left palm and move the right palm to the left (searching). Thoroughly relax so that the girdling vessel can become as supple as silk, with relaxation and tension in proper balance.
3. After practicing the left searching claw, draw the left hand back and change to the right. While practicing the left and right claws, pronounce the sound XU and turn the head in the direction of the "searching" hand.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. As you inhale, withdraw or "search" with the hand on the left or right, and slowly send the Qi to the

Dantian. At the end of the searching or withdrawing, exhale, pronouncing the sound XU, and lightly bend the last joints of the fingers. Focus the mind on the two palms.

J. Crouching Tiger Pounces on Food

[Formula:]

Squat with feet apart and upper body leaning forward.
Bend the left knee and straighten the right.
With head held high, stretch forward.
Lower the head and raise the hip.
Make the breath even and continuous.
Support the body with fingers on the floor,
Letting the lower body sink all the way down,
And then arise again and stand erect.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, lift the right foot and step forward and to the right to form a bow and arrow stance, with the right bent and left straight. At the same time, the hands stretch forward, and the fingertips touch the ground, with the palms suspended (beginners can make contact with the whole palm) and the head slightly raised.
2. Draw the front foot back and place the dorsum on the heel of the rear foot. Incline the body forward in a rowing motion, and then slowly draw the hip back again, keeping the eyes level. Relax the waist, like a tiger about to pounce on its prey.
3. Raise the head and keep the chest low (about 4 cun from the floor). Move the head, waist, hips, and four limbs like an advancing wave, or a tiger about to pounce on its prey. The eyes should look straight ahead. When the arms are perpendicular to the floor, stop chest movement for a moment, and then return to the starting position. Repeat the movements 3–5 times, and then resume the right bow and arrow stance.
4. Stand up after completing the movement and shift to the left bow and arrow stance, with left leg bent and right leg straight. Repeat as above the same number of times. After resuming the original bow and arrow stance, shift to a centered horse stance, with feet shoulder-width apart.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. With hands pressed against the floor, breathe evenly and continuously, while assuming the bow and arrow stance. Inhale as you raise the body or draw it back; exhale as you lower the body to rush forward. Focus straight ahead intently, as if pouncing on prey.

K. Bend Forward and Beat the Drum

[Formula:]

Support the back of the head with the palms,
And bend at the waist until the head reaches the knees.
Let the head drop below the hips.
Close the mouth and firmly clench the teeth,
With tongue pressed against the upper palate.
Bend and raise the elbows to shoulder level,
While pressing palms against the ears to beat the heavenly drum,
And the sounds of a whole orchestra are produced.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, stand erect with feet shoulder-width apart in preparation for practice.
2. Hold the head with the hands, palms pressed against ears, and with the tips of the middle fingers lightly touching each other and the flesh of the fingers covering the Yuzhen point. Bend and raise the two elbows to shoulder level. After assuming this posture, repeatedly tap the Yuzhen Gate with the index finger to make a drumming sound: hence the name "beating the heavenly drum."
3. After beating the heavenly drum, hold the head with two hands, and lower and bend the upper body forward. Lower the head to the space between the legs as far as possible. Straighten the legs, relax the waist and hips, press the tongue against the upper palate, clench the teeth, and look up at the sky behind you through the legs.
4. Slowly straighten the body to resume the standing posture. Repeat the movements of beating the heavenly drum and bending the body low 3–5 times. Resume the standing posture afterwards.

Note: Bend the upper body forward slowly and moderately. Individuals with cerebrovascular diseases should practice this exercise with caution.

2. Breath and Intention

Inhale and exhale through the nose. Breathe with the mouth slightly closed while bending or straightening the body (experienced practitioners can hold the breath while straightening the body). Focus the mind on the Dantian while bending and on the two palms when straightening.

L. Wag the Tail and Shake the Head

[Formula:]

Straighten the knees and extend the arms.
Press the hands against the floor.
Open the eyes wide and shake the head.
Focus the mind,
Straighten the body, and stamp the feet.
Straighten the arms
Seven times each left and right.
When your training is done,
You will be healthy and long-lived.
This is the highest method.

1. Posture

1. Continuing from the preceding posture, withdraw the hands from the back of the head and extend them straight ahead until they are fully outstretched at shoulder level, with palms facing down.
2. Interlace the fingers of the two hands, with palms facing down. Move the hands towards the chest. When they are at a distance of two fists from the chest, bend the upper body forward and then slowly lower the hands to the floor, with straight legs. Keep the upper body in the same bent posture and push forward, first left and then right, rolling the head in the same direction as the body.
3. As you slowly unbend the waist, lift the palms, relax, and separate them.

Note: When bending the upper body, proceed according to your ability. It is not strictly required for the palms to touch the floor. Individuals with cerebrovascular disease should practice this exercise with caution.

2. Breath and Intention

Breathe naturally during this section. Concentrate on the palms when pushing them to the floor and on the tip of the nose when standing straight.

M. Closing Movements

Continuing from the preceding posture, push the hands forward in a standing palm gesture. Lift the heels and shift your weight to the ball of the foot. Gradually turn the palms outward until the shoulder, elbow, and wrist are in alignment, and then circle the hands sideways and gradually draw them back under the armpits, with palms facing up. Meanwhile, lower the heels to the floor and raise the ball of the foot. Now, push forward again. Repeat seven times. Resume the posture Skanda Offers a Pestle as described in the first section. Breathe naturally and imagine your own Qi separating from the universe, gathering in your own body, and sinking to the Dantian.

II. Application

The *Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic* is one of the basic Qigong forms that develop the ability to maintain health and issue external Qi. Through this practice, one can invigorate and activate Qi movement inside the body and improve the sensitivity of the Qi and its external transmission. It not only develops the Qi, but greatly increases strength. Hence this form has been taken as a basic training method for Qigong doctors, massage therapists, and acupuncturists to circulate and transmit the Qi. It is also a healing practice for the old and sick to remove blockages in the channels, promote Qi and blood circulation, prevent diseases, and maintain fitness. The *Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic* has been applied clinically to treat neurosis, gastrointestinal disorders, respiratory disorders, joint pain, cervical and lumbar vertebra problems, and muscle atrophy.

Practice 1–2 times per day. Familiarize yourself with the movements first before gradually coordinating them with the breathing and the mind and ultimately seeking the unity of body, mind, and breath. The intensity of training is largely dependent on the individual's constitution and should only be increased gradually. Elderly and middle-aged practitioners are not advised to guide the Qi upward or lift the heels in practice to prevent high blood pressure, headaches, dizziness, etc. It is best for practitioners with vascular disease of the heart or brain to use less force and more mental intention. All movements should be practiced naturally and in a manner appropriate to the individual's physical condition.

4. Eight Pieces of Brocade (八段锦)

The Eight Pieces of Brocade is a Qigong exercise that mainly focuses on body alignment and stresses the importance of coordinating body movements with breathing. It is a traditional health nourishing practice that has developed out of ancient Daoyin techniques. Though the term is said to have existed in the Sui and Tang dynasties, the form is generally believed to have been composed in the early years of the Southern Song dynasty. References to it are found in Hong Mai's *The Records of Yi Jian* or *Yi Jian Zhi* (夷坚志)[5] in the Song dynasty over 800 years ago.

Brocade refers to silk fabric of the highest quality. The Eight Pieces of Brocade was so named because of the excellence of its composition and its superiority in preserving health and preventing diseases. As a therapeutic practice, it can improve the flexibility of the sinews, strengthen the bones, nourish the Qi, increase strength, promote Qi and blood circulation, and regulate the internal organs. Moreover, the movements are challenging enough to promote health but do not leave the practitioner exhausted.

Modern research has found that this form can improve the regulating function of the nervous system and help blood circulation. Its moderate massaging effect on the organs in the abdominal cavity stimulates the function of all physiological systems and corrects abnormal physical reactions. The Eight Pieces of Brocade is effective in treating many clinical disorders.

In the course of its history, two styles of the Eight Pieces of Brocade have developed: the standing style and the sitting style. We introduce the standing style in this section. The standing style became further divided into two branches during the Qing dynasty: the southern branch and the northern branch. The northern branch, attributed to the famous general Yue Fei, is characterized by forceful and complicated movements. The southern branch, attributed to Liang Shichang, is characterized by simple and gentle movements.

In later ages, mnemonic verses were composed for the Eight Pieces of Brocade to facilitate recitation and memorization. These were constantly revised until reaching a standard form during the beginning of the Guangxu reign of the Qing dynasty.

Push up the heaven with both hands to regulate the triple energizers.
Left and right, the bow is drawn, as if aiming to shoot.
Alternate raising one hand to regulate the spleen and stomach.
Looking backward relieves strain and injury.
Turning side to side clears the Fire of the heart.
Pulling the toes up and down strengthens the kidney and waist.
Clenching the fists and gazing increases power and Qi.
Seven bounces of the heels cure all diseases.

I. Practice Method

A. Holding up Heaven with Both Hands to Regulate the Triple Energizers

Stand naturally and relaxed, with feet shoulder-width apart. Concentrate the mind and calm the breath. The tongue touches the upper palate, and the Qi sinks to the Dantian. Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Slowly raise both hands and extend the arms in front of the abdomen. Circle the hands to the sides, palms facing down. Turn the palms up and interlace the fingers in front of the lower abdomen. While inhaling, raise the hands upward along the controlling vessel to the level of the shoulders. When the wrist is in alignment with the elbow and shoulder, turn the palms upward and lift the arms straight out over the vertex. Raise the head and gaze at the back of the hand for a while. While exhaling, circle the hands downward from both sides and place them in front of the lower abdomen, with the fingers interlaced, palms facing up. Resume the preparatory posture, take a short rest, and repeat the movements 6–8 times.

Note: Use reversed abdominal breathing while raising the arms. Do not shrug the shoulders while lifting the arms along the controlling vessel. When the arms are above the vertex, use a bit of force to push upward in order to exert a pull on the triple energizers.

This practice stretches the four limbs and trunk, while also regulating the muscles, joints, and sinews in the arms, neck, back, and waist. It is used to prevent and treat cervical spondylitis, peripheral shoulder, arthritis, and back pain. Moreover, it can increase the range of movement of the diaphragm and deepen the breathing. Thus, the brain is supplied with sufficient oxygenated blood to relieve fatigue. In addition, the expanding and contracting movements of the abdominal muscles in reverse breathing exert a massaging effect on the internal organs, improving the blood circulation of the organs in both abdominal and pelvic cavities.

B. Draw the Bow Left and Right as if Aiming to Shoot

Stand calmly and relaxed. Step sideways with the left foot and assume the horse stance. Flex the knees, exerting some inward tension. Exert downward pressure through the feet, and sit into the posture, as if riding a horse. Clench the hands loosely and rest the elbows on either side of the hips, keeping them one fist-width apart from the hip joint. Now inhale; stretch the arms forward and raise them to chest level. Flex the left arm as if drawing a bowstring and pull the bow back fully. At the same time, extend the right hand to the right as if setting an arrow, with fingers in the sword finger gesture. Turn the head to the

right and gaze in the direction of the arrow, imagining that the arrow is waiting to be released. While exhaling, circle the hands downward and then upward bilaterally in front of the chest. Finally, move them downward to rest at either side of the hip joints. At the same time, draw the left leg back to its original position and resume the standing posture. Repeat the movements alternately 6–8 times on each side.

Note: In raising the arms from the sides to chest level, it is common to rock back and forth and shrug the shoulders. This can be corrected by grasping the ground firmly with both feet, gathering the Qi in the Dantian, sinking the shoulders, and dropping the elbows.

The purpose of this movement lies in the rotation of the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar vertebra, which helps improve blood circulation to these regions, particularly to the head. At the same time, the practice rhythmically massages the heart and lungs, thereby strengthening the functioning of these organs. In addition, the movement of stretching the arms, expanding the chest, and rotating the neck trains the muscles, bones, and sinews of the corresponding areas.

C. Alternate Raising One Hand to Regulate the Spleen and Stomach

Stand calmly and relaxed, with arms at the sides, palms pressing down, and fingers pointing forward to form the press down standing stake posture. Circle the hands forward and inward, turning the palms upward in front of the lower abdomen. With the fingers pointing at each other, assume the "ball holding," "standing stake" posture. As you inhale, turn the palms over to face down. Slowly lift the left hand up from the left side, with the palm pushing up and the fingers pointed to the right. Stretch the arm straight above the head. At the same time, press the right hand down, with fingers pointed forward. Push both hands in opposite directions for a moment and exhale, while slowly lowering the left hand and raising the right hand up. Turn both hands over, with palms facing up in front of the lower abdomen. The fingers of each hand should point to the other as in the starting posture. Repeat the movements 6–8 times.

Note: When pushing the hands in opposite directions, the body is liable to incline, due to the uneven application of force. Thus, during practice, use force evenly to maintain an upright alignment.

The effect of this practice mainly addresses the middle Jiao of the triple energizer. The alternating upward and downward movement of the arms causes pulling of the flank muscles, liver, gallbladder, spleen, stomach, and other organs, thereby promoting peristalsis in the stomach and intestines, and improving digestion.

D. Looking Backward Relieves the Five Taxations and Seven Damages

Stand calmly and relaxed, as before. Press the Laogong point (PC-8) in the left palm against the lower Dantian in the abdomen and cover the back of the left hand with the right palm. Using abdominal breathing, inhale, so that the abdomen is full, and as you exhale, turn the head to the left and look back over the left shoulder, inwardly visualizing the left Yongquan point (KI-1) to conduct the Qi there. Maintain this for a moment and then, as you inhale, rotate the head to the rear and conduct Qi from the Yongquan point up the back of the legs to the Weilu point at the coccyx to the Mingmen point (GV-4) between the kidneys. Exhale, and turn the head to the right, looking back over the right shoulder. Repeat the movements 6–8 times.

Note: Turn the head the same number of degrees to each side and keep it parallel with the shoulder. Avoid rotating the spine when turning the head.

This exercise involves the whole spine, the thighs, and the entire body in movement, thus improving the function of the nervous system. It can be used to relieve fatigue and regulate the blood and Qi of the internal organs. It can also prevent and treat hypertension, cervical spondylitis, and ophthalmological diseases.

E. Shaking the Head and Wagging the Tail Eliminates Heart Fire

Stand calmly and relaxed. Step sideways with the left foot into the horse stance. The two hands press against the knees, with the fingers turned inward and the arms and elbows exerting outward force. Exhale and guide the Qi downward from the Dantian to the sole of the foot. Now inhale and pivot from the waist, and turn the upper body toward the left front side until the head is directly above the left knee and the hip joint is drawn to the bottom right. Gaze at the tip of the right toes. Straighten the right arm and flex the left to aid in turning the waist. Hold this posture for a moment and then exhale. Repeat this movement to the left and right 6–8 times.

Note: During practice, some tend to bend at the waist, lower the head too much, or over- or under-rotate the body. This may be corrected by ensuring that the head does not extend beyond the toes and that rotation to the left and right is equal, approximately 90°.

This practice emphasizes the importance of calmness and relaxation for relieving stress. It requires the practitioner to conduct Qi downward from the Dantian to the Yongquan point and holding the mind there while exhaling. In so doing, the Qi and blood will descend as well, clearing the Fire of the heart and clarifying the mind. Moreover, the movements of the waist and neck

improve Qi circulation in the thoroughfare, controlling, and governing vessels. This exercise can be used to treat and prevent cervical and lumbar diseases, along with insomnia, restlessness, palpitations, etc.

F. Pulling Toes Up and Down Strengthens the Kidney and Waist

Stand calmly and relaxed. Straighten both legs and rest the hands on either side of the waist, with four fingers pressing on the Shenshu point (BL-23). Inhale and bend the upper body backward. While exhaling, bend forward and slide the hands along the urinary bladder channel to the heel and then forward to the tip of the foot. After holding the mind in the Yongquan point for a moment, inhale and slowly straighten the body. Raise the hands and rest them on the side of the waist. With the mind, bring the Qi to the waist and then consciously hold it in the Mingmen point (GV-4). Repeat the movement 6–8 times.

Note: During practice, it is common to overdo the backward bending, causing the knee and waist to hyperextend. This may be corrected by bending backward only to the extent that the body can remain stable and well-balanced. When bending forward, keep the knees straight, and when bending forward, do not exceed your own capacity.

This exercise is aimed at the lumbar region. The waist houses the kidney; thus long-term movement of the lumbar region can soften the belt vessel and open the controlling and governing vessels. Practice strengthens the kidney, clears the mind, and improves vision. Practitioners with hypertension and cerebrovascular sclerosis, however, should avoid lowering the head too much.

G. Clenching the Fists and Glaring Increases Power and Qi

Stand calmly and relaxed, as before. While inhaling, step sideways with the left foot into a horse stance. Raise the hands to waist level, with fists half-clenched and palms facing up about three fist-widths apart. Position the hands as if holding the moon and hold the mind in the Dantian or Mingmen (GV-4). While exhaling, punch straight ahead with the left fist, slightly turning the head to the left and opening the eyes wide to gaze out past the left fist into the distance, sighting over the left fist. At the same time, draw the right fist back so that the two arms are exerting force in opposite directions. Hold this for a moment and then draw the fists back to the waist. Now relax the arms, circling the hands outward and gradually returning them to the sides. Retract the left foot and resume the standing posture. Repeat the movements 6–8 times.

Note: There is a tendency to shrug the shoulders, collapse the waist, or close the eyes during practice. To correct this, relax the waist, lower the hips, sink

the shoulders, and drop the elbows. Gather the Qi in the Dantian and keep the spine straight and eyes wide open.

This section mainly focuses on mobilizing the four limbs, waist, and eye muscles to strengthen the Qi of the lungs, muscles, bones, and sinews.

H. Seven Bounces of the Heels Cures All Diseases

Stand calmly and relaxed, with legs straight and feet apart. Let the arms hang naturally at the sides, with elbows and arms slightly bent, and keep the mind on the Dantian. While inhaling, press the palms downward, raise the heels, and pull oneself up from the top of the head. As you exhale, drop the heels to the ground and lower the hands to the sides, relaxing the whole body. Repeat the movements 6–8 times.

Note: Before lifting the heels, slightly spread the toes to help keep the body in balance. Keep the head upright, with the Baihui point (GV-20) facing up. Press the hands downward to fully stretch the spine. People with spinal diseases are advised to gently lower the heels without using excessive force.

The vibrations of the rhythmic bouncing of the heels of this form can exercise the sinews of the spinal joints and expel turbid Qi from the Yongquan point. In addition, it can prevent spinal disorders by improving spinal fluid circulation and nervous system function.

II. Application

The Eight Pieces of Brocade Standing Style helps strengthen the body, soothes the sinews, and quickens the network vessels. Patients may choose a few sections among the eight based on their symptoms. For example, a patient with fullness in the chest and hypochondriac region, irritability, restlessness, dizziness, and tinnitus due to liver Qi stagnation is recommended to practice the first and second sections regularly. Patients with pain and tension in the epigastric region, poor appetite, nausea and vomiting, or indigestion due to spleen vacuity are recommended to practice the second and third sections. Patients with dizziness, tinnitus, insomnia, profuse dreaming, sore waist and knees, and irritation in heart, hands, and feet, due to poor interaction between the heart and the kidney, are recommended to practice the fifth and sixth sections. Cases caused by clear Yang failing to ascend may practice the fourth and seventh sections, while those caused by ascendant hyperactivity of liver Yang should practice the fourth and eighth sections. The first four are helpful for patients with coronary, cerebral, and vascular diseases, while the first, second, third, and seventh are helpful for

those with respiratory diseases. The third and fifth are recommended for those with digestive disorders, and the fourth, fifth, and sixth for those with cervical and lumbar vertebra diseases. Those who are free of illness may practice all of the exercises to maintain their health.

5. Five Elements Palm (五行掌)

According to legend, Five Elements Palm was a health and therapeutic practice developed in the Wutai Mountains. The clinical application of the form started in the 1950s and has proven to be effective in disease prevention and treatment. Based on the principles of the Five Elements in Traditional Chinese Medicine, the five sections of the form are designed to address the five internal organs and their corresponding channels, and are therefore well-suited to diagnosis and treatment. In addition, the five sections can be coordinated with the Six Syllable Formula to produce better therapeutic results. Hence Five Elements Palm has been recognized as a representative and typical Medical Qigong form.

Five Elements Palm is a dynamic form that falls into three stages for the beginner. The first stage is focused mainly on body alignment, coordinated with natural breathing, but has no specific mental component. Assume the posture properly, keeping the upper body erect and comfortable and avoiding bending forward or backward. Raise the arms until the elbows and wrists are at shoulder level. Keep the palms upright and form the hands into a hook, with sufficient tension to produce a sensation of tingling or distension. In stepping, pay attention to the four sides and eight corners and to weight distribution and shifting of the weight in bow and arrow and horse stances. Breath regulation is added at the second stage, when the learner has become adept at the movements. More stress is now laid on the coordination of movement with the breath. The breathing should be fine, calm, even, and long as you silently chant the Six Syllable Formula. The mental component is not added until the third stage, during which concentration on the mind is emphasized. At first one may focus the mind on just one side, but when Qi is felt, focus on both sides. It should be noted that one should not chase after the sensation of Qi, lest you create problems. The intensity of practice is dependent on an individual's constitution, and should be gradually increased in increments from three times to five, seven, or even nine times, but no more than that. In general, progress at a rate that allows you to feel comfortable during and after practice, rather than fatigued. Aimed at training the wrists, palms, and fingers, the Five Elements Palm can be adopted by young people as an approach to learning Qi projection.

I. Practice Method

A. Preparatory Posture

1. Stand naturally, loosen the belt and clothes, and relax the whole body.
2. Tap the teeth lightly as if chewing and stir the tongue in the mouth. Gargle the saliva 36 times and swallow in three gulps, while mentally conducting it down to the Dantian in the abdomen.
3. Rub the ears and press the Ermen point (TB-21) 36 times and beat the heavenly drum 48 times.
4. Comb the hair with the fingers 36 times.
5. Rub the hands together until warm and massage the face 36 times.

Note: The preparatory exercises serve as a link between the static and dynamic states and should be taken as seriously as the main part of the form.

B. The Push Method

Pushing belongs to the Wood element of the Five Elements and correlates with moving the Qi of the liver channel and the XU sound of the Six Syllable Formula. It is best to practice this method in the spring and facing east.

1. Starting posture: Stand naturally with the feet shoulder-width apart and parallel to each other. Bend the knees slightly and let the arms hang at your sides. Bend the wrists so that the palms face up and the fingertips point at each other, and place them in front of the Dantian as if holding an object.
2. Inhale slowly through the nose and visualize the clear Qi rising upward from the big toes along the liver channel in the inner part of the thigh to the hypochondriac region. Meanwhile, raise both hands in the posture of holding an object at chest level. Exhale when the hands are in alignment with the shoulders, elbows, and wrists.
3. While exhaling, silently pronounce the syllable XU, with the mind focused on the turbid Qi being expelled and the clear Qi descending from the hypochondriac region along the liver channel to the toes. Meanwhile, turn the hands over and raise the palms upright to face forward. While exhaling, push with the hands toward the left front side, elbows slightly bent, and step with the left foot in the same direction into a bow and arrow stance. Shift the center of gravity to the left foot and straighten the right.

4. At the end of your exhalation, turn the palms over to face upward, with the fingers pointing at each other, and lower them to the abdomen. Meanwhile, straighten the left leg, bend the right knee, and shift the weight to the right leg. Resume breathing as outlined in part 2 above, and repeat the process 3–9 times. Then repeat the movements with the right leg toward the right side 3–9 times.

Note: In practicing pushing, the movements should be carried out slowly and coordinated with soft, natural breathing. Focus the eyes on the two hands and keep the palms upright and strong in order to feel the tingling sensation of Qi. When inhaling, raise the toes lightly and keep the mind on the Dadun point (LV-1) to facilitate the sensation of Qi.

C. The Smoothing Method

Smoothing belongs to the Fire element, moves the Qi in the heart channel, and corresponds to the sound HE. This is best practiced during the summer and facing south.

1. The starting posture is the same as that in the pushing method, though the route of the Qi flow is different. When pressing, inhale and conduct the clear Qi upwards from the tip of the little finger along the heart channel to the posterior edge of the inner part of the arms to the chest.
2. While exhaling, silently pronounce HE, with the mind focused on the turbid Qi being expelled and clear Qi flowing to the tip of the little finger. Meanwhile, move the stretched arms horizontally from the left front side to the right front side as if rubbing a stone inscription. The body, too, moves from left to right, as the legs shift from a bow stance to a horse stance, with the center of gravity in the middle.
3. At the end of your exhalation, turn the palms facing up, with the fingers of one hand pointed to the other, and lower them to the abdomen as in the pushing method. At the same time, straighten the back and squat.
4. As you inhale again, raise the arms and legs. When exhaling, push the palms to the left front side and assume a bow and arrow stance. Move the palms horizontally to the right front side and change to a horse stance as in part 2 of this section. Repeat the process 3–9 times. Withdraw the right leg and resume the preparatory posture. Change to the right leg and perform the movements from the right to the left side 3–9 times.

Note: Apart from silently chanting the syllable HE, the practitioner should keep in mind the Laogong point (PC-8) in the palm and the Shaochong point (HT-9)

at the medial aspect of the little finger beside the nail. Curl the fingers backward to produce the tingling sensation of Qi. Keep the waist upright and move the trunk in coordination with the movement of the hands.

D. The Floating Method

Floating belongs to the Earth element, moves the Qi of the spleen, and corresponds to the sound HU. It is best practiced in late summer facing south.

1. The starting posture is the same as that in pushing. While inhaling, lift the left leg with knees bent and tips of the toes pointing downward. Conduct the clear Qi up from the toes along the spleen channel through the inner part of the leg to the abdomen. Meanwhile, bend the left arm with palms facing up. Bring the four fingers together and hold the thumb open to form a circle with the Hukou ("tiger's mouth" formed by thumb and index finger). With the elbow as an axis, circle the forearm in the order of right, up, left, and down. Focus the eyes on the left hand, and when it is at eye level, stop the inhalation, with the palm facing the face.
2. While exhaling, silently pronounce the syllable HU, with the mind focused on the turbid Qi being expelled and the clear Qi descending to the foot along the spleen channel. Turn the left hand over with the palm facing forward. Circle it to the left and downward until it reaches the abdomen. Turn it over, with the palm facing up, and rest it under the right hand. Meanwhile, lower the left foot along with the descent of the left hand.
3. As you inhale again, repeat the movements with the right hand and right foot. Repeat the process 3–9 times. If space allows, the practitioner may step forward like this continuously.

Note: In training the smoothing method, one needs to learn how to coordinate the eyes, hands, head, and legs with breathing and the mind. Beginners may break this exercise into sections and practice them one by one to familiarize themselves with the basics. For example, one may adopt the standing or sitting postures to train the coordination between the movements of the head, hands, and eyes with the breathing. The eyes and head should follow the movement of the hands. Inhalation should be shortened and quickened, but exhalation should be lengthened and slowed. Silently chant the syllable HU. When adept enough, coordinate with the movements of the foot, while attending to shifting of the weight and the balance. Lift the leg as much as possible when inhaling, with the mind focused on the turbid Qi ascending. Use strength to keep the tips of the toes pointing downward and focus the mind on the Yinbai point

(SP-1) to facilitate the sensation of Qi. While exhaling, gently lower the leg and visualize the turbid Qi being expelled and the clear Qi descending. The movements should be conducted as light and agile as an ape.

E. The Pinch Method

Pinching belongs to the Metal element, moves the Qi of the lung, and corresponds to the sound XI. Practice in the fall facing west for best results.

1. Preparatory posture: With the left foot, take a large step in the direction of the left front corner to form a forward bow and arrow stance. Extend the left arm in the same direction with palm facing up. Curl the fingers and gather them together as if pinching something. Keep the shoulder, elbow, and wrist in alignment. Raise the right arm to chest level and bend the elbow back, with palm facing down. Curl the fingers and gather them together as if pinching something. Keep the shoulder, elbow, and wrist in alignment.
2. While inhaling, extend the left leg, bend the right knee, and shift the center of gravity onto the right leg. Lean the hips back. Meanwhile, bend the left elbow and withdraw the left arm. Now extend the right arm over the left one. Turn the hands over when they are opposite to each other, so that the left palm faces downward and the right palm faces up. Conduct the clear Qi upward from the thumb along the lung channel at the anterior edge of the medial aspect of the arm to the lungs.
3. While exhaling, silently pronounce the sound XI and visualize the turbid Qi being expelled. Bend the right elbow and withdraw the right arm. Extend the left arm in the direction of the left front corner and turn the waist and chest accordingly to assume the starting posture. Repeat the movements 3–9 times alternately on both sides.

Note: The horizontal movements and the turning of the upper body should be conducted slowly and gently. Extend the arms as far as possible to expand the chest. Curl the fingers and gather them together firmly to produce a sensation of Qi at the Yuji (LU-10) and Taiyuan (LU-9) points. The technique may be broken down into smaller parts. Practice the movements of the hands and feet separately if it proves to be too difficult to coordinate them.

F. The Groping Method

Groping belongs to the Water element, moves the Qi of the kidney, and corresponds to the sound CHUI. Practice in the winter facing south for best results.

1. Starting posture: With the left foot, take a large step forward to form a front bow and arrow stance. Let the arms hang naturally at the sides. Bend the elbows slightly, turn the palms downward, with the fingers pointing forward, and place them in the same direction in front of the abdomen.
2. While inhaling, conduct the clear Qi upward from the Yongquan point (KI-1) along the kidney channel through the posterior edge of the medial aspect of the leg to the kidney. Meanwhile, extend the left leg, bend the right knee, and shift the weight to the right leg. Slightly raise the left toes. Circle the hands clockwise from the left to the front. Stop at the right front corner in front of the abdomen as inhalation ends.
3. While exhaling, silently pronounce the syllable CHUI and visualize the turbid Qi being expelled and clear Qi descending to the Yongquan point in the ball of the foot. Extend the hands to the left front. Focus on the Laogong point in the palm and keep the fingers curled upwards to produce a sensation of Qi. Meanwhile, bend the left knee, extend the right leg, and shift the center of gravity forward to the left foot. Resume the starting posture at the end of exhalation. Repeat the movements alternately left and right 3–9 times.

Note: In practicing groping, circle the palms horizontally below the navel as if milling soybeans to make tofu. Keep the upper body straight, turn the waist in coordination with the movements of the palms, and focus on the Shenshu (BL-23) and Mingmen (GV-4). Curl the tips of the toes up while inhaling and the fingers back while exhaling to strengthen the sensation of Qi.

G. Closing Movements

The closing movements belong to the Fire element, move the Qi through the triple energizer, and correspond to the sound XI. Face south and practice in any season.

1. The preparatory posture is the same as in the pushing method. As the hands reach the middle Dantian, press the palms together. When the thumbs reach the Yintang point between the eyebrows, complete your inhalation. As you inhale, retract the abdomen and constrict the anal sphincter. Raise the Qi up the govenor vessel to the upper Dantian.
2. While exhaling, lower the closed palms along the conception vessel and release them back to the sides as you guide the Qi down to the lower Dantian. Turn the palms over and repeat the process three times and then lay them over the lower Dantian with the left hand underneath

the right for males and the right hand underneath the left for females. Conduct the Qi back to its origin and finish your practice with nine natural breaths.

Note: The closing exercise is just as important as the preparatory posture and the form as a whole. It should not be neglected.

II. Application

The entire series may be practiced for health benefits, or individual sections based on the Five Elements or four seasons may be practiced separately. Those practicing for specific therapeutic purposes may use the mutual engendering and restraining interactions of the Five Elements or pattern identification of the viscera and bowels to isolate problematic areas for targeted treatment.

1. Pushing helps soothe the liver Qi and restrain hyperactivity of Yang, and is thus effective for headaches, dizziness, redness of eyes, tinnitus, bitter taste in the mouth, dryness in throat, irritability, nausea, vomiting, chest and abdomen distension, abdominal pain, hernia, diarrhea, enuresis, disturbed urination, and so forth. Other indications include neurosis, hypertension, glaucoma, chronic gastritis, peptic ulceration, chronic enteritis, chronic hepatitis, irregular menstruation, and menopause syndromes.
2. Smoothing can clear the heart and drain Fire, and nourish blood and quiet the spirit. It is often applied to cases with symptoms of irritability, thirst, palpitation, insomnia, dream sleep, hysteria, hot palms, pain syndrome along the heart meridian, etc. Other indications include neurosis, cardiovascular neurosis, arrhythmia, and chronic inflammation of the urogenital system.
3. Floating helps strengthen the spleen and stomach to promote digestion and is thus applicable to cases of poor appetite, distension in the gastric cavity, belching, nausea, acid regurgitation, abdominal pain, borborygmus, diarrhea, dysentery, phlegm syndromes, edema, heaviness of the body, fatigue, stiffness and pain in the tongue, jaundice, and disturbed urination. Other indications include chronic gastritis, peptic ulceration, chronic enteritis, chronic hepatitis, and disorders of the digestive tract.
4. Pinching can perfuse and promote the lung Qi, descend the Qi, and dispel phlegm. It relieves syndromes of neck stiffness, coughs, sore and itchy throat, dry mouth, Qi counter flow, asthma, perfusion of phlegm, fever, aversion to cold, adiaphoresis, chest pain, shortness of

breath, frequent and scanty urine, and pain along the lung channel. Other indications include the common cold, chronic bronchitis, asthma, bronchiectasis, pulmonary emphysema, and pulmonary tuberculosis in the recovery stage, and joint disorders in the neck, shoulder, back, and waist.

5. Groping can warm the Yang to dispel cold and boost Yin to clear heat. Thus it is applicable to cases involving soreness of the waist and knees, cold limbs, aversion to cold, edema, dysuria, impotence, spermatorrhea, premature ejaculation, cold sperm, infertility, sterility, dizziness, tinnitus, tidal fever, night sweating, palpitation, insomnia, dryness in mouth, sore throat, bloody sputum, asthma, back pain, jaundice, diarrhea, somnolence, etc. Other indications include neurosis, pulmonary tuberculosis, heart diseases, lung diseases, kidney diseases, hypertension, hypotension, and so forth.
6. The closing section facilitates the flow of Qi in the triple energizer, harmonizes the five internal organs, regulates and frees the Qi circulation, and balances Yin and Yang. It can be adopted by patients with either vacuity or repletion syndromes or practiced by healthy individuals to stay fit.

6. Health Preserving Qigong (保健功)

Adapted from traditional Daoyin therapy, Health Preserving Qigong consists of self-massage and movements of different body parts. The movements are slow, gentle, soft, and pliable. Thus the form is fit for men, women, the elderly, and young; it can both treat disease and preserve health.

Buddhist monk Huilin (释慧琳) of the Tang dynasty remarked in the *Commentary on the Earth Classic* or *Di Jing Shu Yi* (地经疏义): "The common people rub and pinch themselves, stretching and flexing the arms and legs to relieve fatigue and vexation. This is known as Daoyin."[6] Health Preserving Qigong is precisely this kind of "self-massage" Daoyin technique. Its function was summarized by Ming dynasty self-cultivation expert Gao Lian (高濂) in *Eight Essays for Cherishing Life* or *Zun Sheng Ba Jian* (遵生八笺): "Daoyin and massage help move the Qi and blood, benefit the joints, and prevent evil and malignant Qi from attacking the body. It is said that a moving hinge will never rot and flowing water never become stagnant. It is the same with the human body. Thus for prolonging life and preventing disease, one should use Daoyin and massage as the first choice."[7]

I. Practice Method

1. Quiet Sitting

One may choose among upright sitting, cross-legged sitting, or sitting with the back against something. Close the eyes, draw in the chest, close the fingers around the thumb, place the hands on the thighs, and press the tongue against the upper palate. Focus the mind in the Dantian and use natural or normal abdominal breathing. Eliminate stray thoughts, calm the mind, and relax the entire body. Maintain this state for 50 breaths.

Note: The sitting posture should be chosen based on the practice site and the constitution of the individual. The duration may also vary from 30 to 50 breaths. Mental concentration on the Dantian should be "casual," somewhere between intentional and unintentional, without any forced effort.

Quiet sitting helps relax the body, tranquilize the mind, calm the spirit, and cultivate source Qi, and helps prepare for further practice.

2. Nose Qigong

Bend the thumbs slightly and use the second section to lightly rub the two sides of the nose from top to bottom 9–18 times. Then use the first phalangeal joint to knead the Yingxiang point (LI-20) 9–18 times.

This exercise improves the blood circulation of the respiratory tract and nasal passages and strengthens the disease resistance of the lung against flu and rhinitis. Yingxiang is a crossing acupoint of the hand and foot Yangming channels. It serves an adjunctive role in treating upper right abdominal pain caused by biliary ascariasis due to reversal of stomach and gallbladder Qi.

3. Eye Qigong

Close the eyes, bend the thumbs, and with the phalangeal joint lightly rub the eyebrow and the upper and lower eyelids from medial to lateral 9–18 times. Rub the hands together until they are very warm and press the palms against the eyes three times. Knead the Jingming (BL-1), Yuyao (EX-HN-4), Tongziliao (GB-1), and Chengqi (ST-1) with the middle fingers 9–18 times. Lightly close the eyes and circle them clockwise and counterclockwise 9–18 times. Now gently open the eyes and gaze at a green object in the distance, shifting your focus from near to far.

Note: Circle the eyes slowly and gradually increase the duration of movement. Beginners do not need to adhere to time requirements to avoid distension, dizziness, and vomiting.

This form is used to improve blood circulation in the circumocular region, strengthen the eye muscles, and regulate the function of the nerves and liver to improve vision and prevent eye diseases.

4. Face Rubbing Qigong (also called Dry Face Washing)

Rub the hands together until very warm and press them against the forehead. Now rub them along the sides of the nose to the jaw and then back again to the forehead. Repeat the process 18–36 times (Figure 6.2).

This exercise is used to improve blood circulation to the face. Practicing it all year round will result in a rosy and lustrous complexion and smooth skin. Since the hand and foot Yangming channels flow across the face, rubbing the face can free the Qi of these channels.

Figure 6.2 Face rubbing Qigong. or dry face washing. Rub the hands together until very warm and press them against the forehead, then rub them along the sides of the nose to the jaw and then back again to the forehead

5. Ear Qigong

Continuing from the preceding posture, massage and rub the ears with warm palms 9–18 times. Alternately pull the top of the ear with the hand of the opposite side across the vertex 9–18 times. Press and then release the ear canal with the thenar eminence nine times. Block the ear canal with the thenar eminence while resting the other fingers on the occiput. Firmly press the index finger on the middle finger, then snap it off and strike the occiput to produce a drumming sound. Repeat the process of "beating the heavenly drum" 24 times (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3 Ear Qigong. Massage and rub the ears, pull the top of the ear, press and then release the ear canal, and strike the occiput

Note: During practice, remember to press the palms firmly against the ear canals to attain the desired effects.

Spiritual Pivot—Oral Questions and Answers or *Lingshu—Kouwen Pian*[8] states that "the ear is the junction of various channels." Three hand and foot Yang channels are all directly connected to the ear, while the Yin channels connect with the ear through the divergent network vessels flowing into the Yang channels. *Plain Questions—Discourse on Cross Needling* or *Suwen—Miuci Lun*[8] says: "The network vessels of the hand and foot Shaoyin and Taiyin and Yangming of the foot all join in the ear." This statement shows that the ear is closely related to the internal organs and channels of the body. Thus, stimulating the points corresponding to the respective internal organs by massaging the auricle can regulate those organs and channels, improving their functions.

The change of ear pressure created by pressing and then releasing the ear canal helps increase the elasticity of the eardrum and prevent ear membrane invagination. *Plain Questions—Discourse on Sea* or *Suwen—Hailun*[8] says: "Insufficient Marrow Sea results in vertigo and tinnitus." The moderate stimulus to the brain produced by beating the heavenly drum helps regulate the central nervous system and prevent dizziness, headache, tinnitus, deafness, senile amnesia, and dementia.

6. Mouth Qigong

Teeth tapping: Gently tap the upper and lower teeth together 36–72 times.

Tongue stirring: In ancient times, this was known as "scarlet dragon stirring the ocean." Circle the tongue along the gingiva clockwise and counterclockwise

9–18 times respectively. Retain the saliva in the mouth and proceed to the next section.

Gargling saliva: Gargle the saliva produced by the tongue, stirring 18–36 times. Then swallow it in three gulps and mentally guide it down to the lower Dantian.

Note: One may either tap the front teeth first, followed by the molars, or tap them all at the same time. In stirring the tongue, the number of times should be gradually increased. Elderly practitioners who are subject to apoplexy should be cautious. Because their tongues are not flexible enough, they may start with tongue stirring in one direction three times, and then in the opposite direction another three times. Increase the stirring gradually and go through the motion of gargling regardless of whether saliva is produced or not.

This exercise helps boost the kidney and secure the root. Guiding saliva upward strengthens the spleen and boosts the Qi, and enriches the Yin and emolliates the liver. The kidney governs the bones, and the teeth are the surplus of the bones; thus regularly tapping the teeth can boost the kidney and secure the root. Stirring the tongue increases the secretions of the digestive glands (submandibular gland, sublingual gland, parotid gland, etc.) and thus can improve digestion and absorption.

7. Nape of the Neck Qigong

Interlace the fingers and hold the neck at the occiput. Lower and raise the head 3–9 times with the hands. Using the movement of the forearms, strike the neck 3–9 times with the palms. Knead the Fengchi (GB-20) clockwise and counterclockwise 9–18 times with the hypothenar and thenar eminences of the thumb.

The six Yang channels and the governor vessel all flow through the neck. Fengchi is a crossing point of the Shaoyang and Yangwei channels of the hands and feet. This exercise stimulates the Yang Qi, frees the joints, and activates the Qi and blood. It is effective for syndromes such as dizziness, headache, blurred vision, numbness in the upper arms, and pain in the shoulders and back due to cold stagnation or channel blockage in the neck caused by injury.

The tough ligaments and strong muscles of the neck serve to protect the vital blood vessels and nerves under the skin. This exercise can greatly improve blood circulation and increase the flexibility of the neck to reinforce its protective functions.

8. Rubbing the Shoulders

Knead the right shoulder with the left palm, and then the left shoulder with the right palm, 18 times respectively. Pinch the right Jianjing (GB-21) with the

left thumb or the base of the palm and the other four fingers. Repeat with the right hand for the same number of times. Rotate the shoulders in the following order—forward, upward, backward, and downward—for 9–18 circles and repeat in reverse order the same number of times.

This exercise massages the Jianliao (SJ-14), Jianjing (GB-21), and Jianzhen (SI-9) points by kneading, pinching, and rotating the shoulders. It helps free the channels, regulate the joints, and promote blood circulation in the shoulder area, preventing shoulder joint disorders.

9. Squeezing the Spine

Lightly clench the fists, bend the arms at the elbow 90°, and swing the arms back and forth 18 times (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 Squeezing the spine. Lightly clench the fists, bend the arms at the elbow 90°, and swing the arms back and forth

Note: When swinging the arms back and forth, draw the armpits in a little. This exercise can be used to strengthen the shoulder joints and muscles of the back and chest, improve blood circulation, free the 12 channels plus controlling and governor vessels, and promote the function of the internal organs. It is effective for shoulder joint disorders, thoracic and lumbar vertebra disease, and heart disease.

10. Rubbing the Waist

Rub the hands together until they are warm and then cover the Shenshu points (BL-23) with the palms, rubbing the waist around the Mingmen and Shenshu area horizontally 18 times and vertically 18 times (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5 Rubbing the waist. Cover each Shen Shu point (BL23) with the palms and rub the Ming Men and Shen Shu areas

Note: First cover the Shenshu with the palms, next massage up and down, and finally left and right.

The waist houses the kidney. This exercise can be used to strengthen the waist and kidney, preventing lumbar disorders, dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, etc.

11. Weaving Qigong

Sit on a bed with legs extended in front of you. Bring the knees together and point the toes upward. Inhale and reach forward with the palms facing forward and fingers facing each other. Bend forward and try to touch the toes. Exhale and retract the hands, with the fingers facing each other and the palms facing in. Inhale as the body returns to the upright position. Repeat the movements 36 times (Figure 6.6).

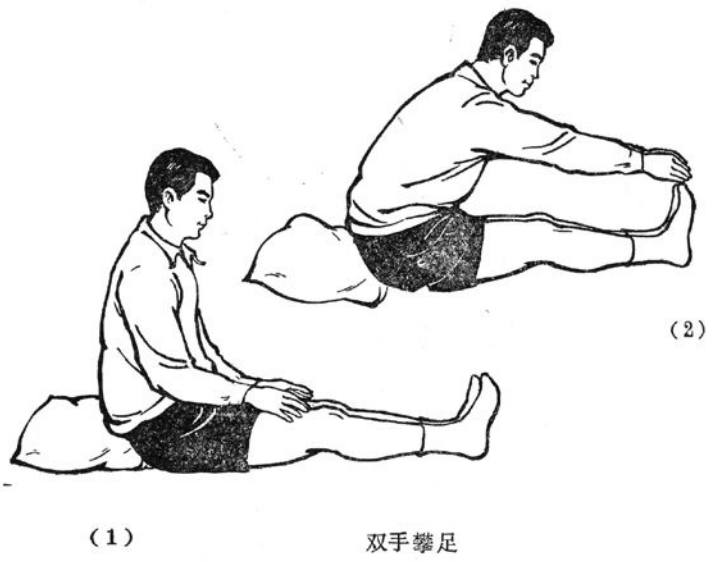

Figure 6.6 Weaving Qigong. Sit on a bed with legs extended in front of you. With fingers facing each other, inhale and bend forward with the palms facing forward to touch the toes. Then, exhale and have the palms facing in as the body returns to the upright position

Note: The beginner may use natural breathing at first, but after mastering the exercise, he/she may coordinate breathing with the movements. The forward extension should be increased gradually to avoid lumbar muscle strain. The movement of the waist, but not the movement of the hands, should lead the body returning to the upright position. During the bending and straightening of the waist, the lumbar muscles and dorsal muscles undergo contraction and relaxation. If coordinated with breathing, the movements can regulate the sympathetic nerves to improve blood circulation and metabolism. This form is quite effective in preventing and treating pain in the back and waist due to various factors.

12. Harmonizing the Girdling Vessel

Sit cross-legged with the four fingers clenched around the thumb. Tilt the upper body to the left, front, right, and back for 18 rotations. Rotate the upper body in the opposite direction another 18 times. Exhale while bending forward; inhale while bending backward.

Note: The beginner may use natural breathing at first, and then after the exercise is mastered, coordinate the breathing with the movement.

This exercise trains the muscles of the chest, waist, back, and abdomen, as well as the internal organs, through the rotating movements of the waist. It can

promote Qi and blood circulation of the 12 regular channels and eight extra channels, as well as the governor and controlling vessels and especially the girding vessel. The exercise can be used to strengthen the kidney and waist and regulate the girdling vessel to prevent and treat lumbar back pain and other internal diseases.

13. Rubbing the Weilu

Press the index and middle fingers together and rub the Weilu 36 times.

Note: The Weilu is the area where the divergent branch of the foot Taiyang urinary bladder meridian goes downward through the buttocks to the feet. Changqiang (DU-1) is the luo-connecting point of the govenor vessel and the crossing point of the govenor vessel of the foot Shaoyang and foot Shaoyin. This exercise can free the governor vessel, boost the kidney, free the urinary bladder channel Qi, and stimulate the peripheral nerves around the anus and its blood circulation to prevent and treat hemorrhoids, rectal prolapse, and gynecological diseases, such as pelvic inflammation.

14. Rubbing the Dantian

Rub the hands together until they are warm and cover the Qichong point (ST-30) above the pubic tubercle and two cuns from the anterior midline. Make circling movements with the left palm around the navel in the same direction as the peristalsis of the large intestine in the following order: lower right abdomen, upper right abdomen, upper left abdomen, lower left abdomen, and then back to the lower right abdomen. Repeat the circling movements 100 times. Afterwards, rub the hands together until very warm and cover the lower left abdomen with the left hand and rub the Dantian with the right palm 100 times.

Note: Male practitioners may hold the scrotum with one hand and massage the Dantian with the other.

This exercise strengthens the spleen and boosts the Qi, emolliates the liver and supplements the kidney, strengthens the activities of the internal organs, improves blood circulation in the abdomen, and promotes gastrointestinal peristalsis. It is effective for indigestion, abdominal distension, abdominal pain, constipation, urinary disorders, etc.

15. Massaging the Knees

Rub the hands together until they are warm and place them over the knees. Massage the knee joints 100 times and press and knead the Zusanli point (ST-36) below the knee 100 times.

The knee joint is one of the "eight ravines" or Ba Xiu (八虚). *Spiritual Pivot—Evil Intrusion* or *Lingshu—Xieke*[8] says: "Man has eight ravines (wrist, elbow, knee, and ankle)… They reflect signs of the five internal organs… The eight ravines are the home of the body's hinges, the loci of the genuine Qi, and the place where blood network vessels run through…" Therefore, the eight ravines all play very important roles in supporting the body. This exercise can course the channels and enliven the blood and soften the sinews and strengthen the bones. Thus it can be used to treat arthritis and delay senescence.

16. Rubbing the Yongquan

Taking the Yongquan point (KI-1) as the center, rub the right sole with the left index and middle fingers 100 times, and then rub the left sole with the right index and middle fingers 100 times.

Note: Rub the Yongquan with enough force to produce a feeling of warmth in the sole.

Rubbing the Yongquan, the well point of the foot Shaoyin kidney channels, opens the orifices and quietens the spirit and promotes heart–kidney interaction. Moreover, it conducts Qi downwards and thus can prevent high blood pressure, blurred vision, and dizziness.

II. Application

Health Preserving Qigong is comprised of 16 exercises and serves to strengthen the body and improve health. It soothes the sinews and quickens the network vessels, promotes Qi and blood, and prevents disease. One may select several exercises for regular practice in the morning and evening. Nose Qigong, Eye Qigong, Face Rubbing Qigong, Waist Rubbing Qigong, Dantian Rubbing Qigong, and Mouth Qigong can be used following other Qigong exercises to help the practitioner transition to a normal state. Health Preserving Qigong has been adopted as the primary choice for senior and middle-aged citizens and patients with chronic diseases.

7. Post Standing Qigong (站桩功)

Post standing (standing stake) is a traditional Qigong form practiced mainly in a standing posture. It stresses not only body alignment, but breathing and the mind as well. The word "post" suggests the root of a tree, which is deep in

the earth and unshakable. Though associated with Martial Arts Qigong, post standing is also used for health preservation and to treat diseases.

During its long history, post standing has branched into various styles, most of which adopt the standing posture, and hence it is known as post standing. The phrase "Stand alone and guard your spirit" in *Plain Questions—On Health-Keeping of Remote Antiquity* or *Su Wen—Shang Gu Tian Zhen Lun* (素问 • 上古天真论)[8] implies post standing. Similar phrases, such as "leaning against the wall" and "upstanding posture," are found in *General Treatise on Etiology and Symptomology of Various Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun* (诸病源候论).[9] Post standing was popularized during the 1950s as one of the main Medical Qigong forms. In over 40 years of clinical application, it has proven its efficacy in treating many sorts of disease.

The postures adopted by various schools differ from one another, but representative variations include the natural post, three-circle post, downward pressing post, rounded post, horse mounting post, subduing tiger post, Shaolin sword finger post, and so forth.

Post standing falls into three categories based on the height of the posture: high, medium, and low. The high posture is suitable for the elderly and sick, since it requires only slight bending of the knees, and therefore consumes the least energy. The medium height consumes more energy, as the knees are bent at 130°, and is therefore appropriate for patients with minor ailments. The low posture requires the knees to bend 90°, a rather difficult posture that is best for healthy persons or patients who are in the process of recovering.

I. Practice Method

A. Natural Post Standing

1. Body Adjustment

Stand erect in a natural manner, with calm Qi and a serene spirit. Step sideways with the left foot so that the two feet are shoulder-width, or a little wider, and parallel with each other. Bend the knees slightly, relax the hips, and contract the abdomen. Let the arms hang loosely at your sides, with palm facing inward and elbows slightly bent. Spread the fingers apart and slightly bend the finger joints, so that the palms are cupped and about 15 cm from the body.

Keep the body and head erect with a suspending force, as if pulling oneself up from the top of the head. Sink the shoulders, hollow the armpits, draw in the chest, straighten the back, stretch the waist, contract the abdomen, grasp the ground with the toes, and straighten the knees. Close the eyes or gaze at an object in the distance. Clench the teeth lightly, with the mouth slightly open, and curl the tongue. Draw the lower jaw inward with a slight smile.

2. Breathing Adjustment

Use natural breathing first and gradually deepen into abdominal breathing.

3. Mind Adjustment

Mainly use the Tri-Line Relaxation method and gradually progress to the visualization method, such as concentrating the mind in the lower Dantian and imagining it becoming warm. When you begin to feel warmth in the Dantian, slowly spread the warmth to the whole abdomen and finally take three deep, long breaths and return your focus to the Dantian.

Note: Start with natural breathing and change gradually to normal abdominal breathing. Gradually slow the breathing, but not so much that suffocation is felt. Mental training begins with the Tri-Line Relaxation method, which is gradually replaced by the visualization method. Be natural and avoid anything forced. Strive to keep the upper body relaxed and the lower body substantial, so as to promote stability.

Natural post standing is meant to achieve a balanced state by adopting a relaxed, serene, and natural posture. It has been recognized as a fundamental training method for Qigong, martial arts, and Taiji Quan. This form benefits the nervous system, relieves tension, calms the spirit, and is very effective in promoting return of venous blood in the lower extremities. It has some healing power in cases of microcirculatory disorders due to diabetes and arteriolar spasm due to hypertension.

B. Three-Circle Post Standing

1. Body Adjustment

This method has two styles—ball holding and ball encircling, which are mainly differentiated on the basis of the degree of bend in the arms. Holding the ball requires a lesser degree of bending, and encircling, a greater degree. In practicing holding the ball, form a semicircle with the arms, palms, and fingers facing each other, as if holding a ball in front of the chest. At the same time, look forward or slightly downward.

In practicing encircling a ball, hold the arms as if embracing a tree, with palms facing inward and about two feet from the chest. Look forward or slightly downward. Choose a high, medium, or low stance, depending on individual condition.

2. Breathing Adjustment

Regulate the breathing to make it deep, slow, fine, and continuous. Deepen and prolong the breath as the posture gradually lowers.

3. Mind Adjustment

Imagine two balloons, one each in the hands and arms, rotating 36 times clockwise, while getting progressively larger, and then 36 times counterclockwise, while getting progressively smaller. The feet are firmly planted on the ground, as if standing on a well stone, deep rooted and unshakable.

Note: The three circles refer to the circle of the hand formed as if holding a ball with open fingers, the circle of the arm formed as if holding a tree, and the circle of the feet formed by turning the toes in to make a semicircle. Breathe deeply and steadily. Mentally focus on the rotating balls, with a relaxed attitude, hovering between existence and non-existence.

This exercise is characterized by three circles: that between the hands, the arms, and the arches of the feet, in addition to the low, medium, and high postures based on the angle of knee flexion. In terms of breath and mind adjustment, it mainly employs normal abdominal breathing and gradually increases the intensity of concentration of the mind on the lower Dantian.

The effects of this exercise on the circulatory and respiratory systems are evident. It improves respiratory efficiency and increases blood and oxygen supply in the peripheral tissues by expanding the movement of the diaphragm and regulating myotasis of the lung. Moreover, it has a comprehensive effect on the motor system, coordinating the movements of the shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, ankle, and toe joints, and promotes return of venous blood in the lower extremities. Hence it is often used to treat arthropathy, spinal disease, microcirculatory disorders due to diabetes, and arteriolar spasm due to hypertension.

C. Downward Pressing Post Standing

1. Body Adjustment

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and arms naturally at the sides. Raise the arms until the forearms are parallel to the ground, with fingers pointed and separated. The palms should face down as if pressing against the ground. Look forward or slightly downward. The rest is the same as the three-circle technique.

2. Breathing and Mind Adjustments

Use normal abdominal breathing and try prolonging the duration of the exhalation. While exhaling, conduct the Qi downward to the lower Dantian and visualize the Qi as if it was a vapor circulating throughout the body, including the limbs, joints, organs of the five senses, and nine orifices, before finally returning to the Dantian.

Note: Straighten the fingers, keep the forearms parallel with the ground, press the palms downward, and keep the toes turned in and knees bent. Breathe smoothly and keep the mind at ease, but firmly focused on the lower Dantian.

The posture features of this type of post standing are three different heights of posture (low, medium, and high) corresponding to the angles of knee flexion and three circles formed by the two hands, two arms, and two arches of the two feet. In terms of breath and the mind, this post standing adopts counterclockwise abdominal breathing and gradually increases the intensity of the mental concentration on the lower Dantian; through the diaphragm's rising and falling movements, it regulates the lung capacity, improving the effectiveness of the breathing, and effectively provides more oxygen to peripheral tissue, and muscles. Therefore, its rehabilitative effects are obviously on the respiratory and the circulatory systems. The three-circle posture facilitates the coordination of all the joints of the shoulders, elbows, wrists, hands, fingers, hips, knees, ankles, feet, and toes, and venous return from the lower extremities. Therefore, it is effective for pain syndromes such as spinal arthritis, as well as peripheral circulatory problems due to diabetes or hypertension.

D. Subduing Tiger Post Standing

1. Body Adjustment

Step forward and to the left with the left foot to form a T shape, with the two feet 3 feet apart. Lower the body slightly, as if riding a horse, with the two legs forming a 90° angle. Meanwhile, place the left hand 10 cm over the left thigh and the right hand 10 cm above the right knee, as if the left hand were pressing on a tiger's head, while the right is grasping its tail by the root. Raise the head and look at the left front side. Practice likewise on the opposite side with the right leg in front.

2. Breathing Adjustment

Start with normal abdominal breathing and gradually transition to reverse abdominal breathing, with a slower respiratory rhythm and rate and increased volume and depth.

3. Mind Adjustment

Look straight ahead and imagine subduing a fierce tiger beneath you. Unify your mind and Qi and circulate the Qi to the hips, legs, and feet, and imagine the hands using strength to control the tiger's head and tail. Stand like a tree firmly rooted in the ground.

Note: When exhaling, squat slightly with the hands clamped firmly on the head and tail of the tiger and draw the knees inward to aid in controlling the body of the tiger. Meanwhile, raise the head and look forward, full of spirit. Coordinate the vision with the Qi, pay attention to training the lower body, and make the breath deep, long, and natural according to individual ability.

This post standing style is mainly suitable for young people and for long-term practice. This exercise can improve the muscular strength of the legs, especially the quadriceps, biceps femoris, and gastrocnemius. At the same time, this technique harmonizes the muscles with the joints, ligaments, vessels, and nerves, improving the stability and coordination of the entire body. It can be used to treat chronic soft tissue injuries in the lumbosacral area and the legs. The therapeutic effects of this method on prolapse of the lumbar intervertebral disc, chronic strain of lumbar muscles, sacroiliac joint dysfunction syndrome, and injury of knee joint and anklebone are quite evident.

E. Shaolin Sword Finger Post Standing

1. Body Adjustment

Take a half step sideways with the left foot, keeping the feet parallel and about 45 cm apart. Sit into a horse stance and slowly raise the two arms, with hands in sword finger shape, until they are level with the shoulders. The palms face downward and fingers point forward. Keep the upper body erect, contract the abdomen, and gently constrict the Weilu. Draw in the chest and straighten the back. Keep the head erect and the neck relaxed. Retract the lower jaw so that the Baihui (GV-20), Huiyin (CV-1), and the midpoint between the heels are in alignment. Keep the knee joints naturally separated and do not let the knees extend beyond the tips of the toes. Slightly close the eyes and gaze ahead, but without staring intently; relax the whole body, but do not become too lax.

2. Breathing Adjustment

Mainly use normal abdominal breathing, with reverse abdominal breathing as an adjunct. Sink the Qi to the Dantian.

3. Mind Adjustment

Imagine a warm ball of Qi growing bigger and stronger in the Dantian and then flowing downward along the three Yin channels to the Yongquan point (KI-1), where it takes root. Then imagine it returning to the Dantian, where the ball shrinks in size and weakens and spreads throughout the body to nourish the mind.

Note: Stand with feet parallel and a little more than shoulder-width apart. Put the index and middle fingers together to make a sword finger. Lift the arms until the shoulders, elbows, wrists, and hands are in alignment. Keep the left and right arms shoulder-width apart. Bend the knees at a high, medium, or low stance. Keep the upper body relaxed. Mainly use normal abdominal breathing. Prolong the duration of respiration and deepen the breathing as much as possible. Focus the mind on the lower part of the body until warmth is felt. Conduct the warm sensation up and down along the three Yin channels of the foot.

This exercise is aimed at training muscles, joints, ligaments, and especially the four limbs. Most practitioners adopt reverse abdominal breathing. This exercise regulates the circulation of Qi and blood throughout the whole body and has one of the most dramatic physical effects of all standing meditations. It can improve the vascular and lymphatic systems. Moreover, it helps strengthen the heart by increasing the amount of blood flowing back to the heart and improves the ventricular stroke volume and microcirculation.

F. Resting Post Standing

1. Body Adjustment

Use the same posture as natural post standing. Raise the palms to the lumbar region and place the back of the wrist against the Yaoyan (EX-B-7), with wrists slightly bent. Separate the fingers, slightly bend them, and cup the palm. Sink the shoulders and elbows, keeping the armpits hollow. The other requirements are the same as for natural post standing. Regulate the mind and breathe gently as if taking a rest.

2. Breathing Adjustment

Adopt natural breathing.

3. Mind Adjustment

Concentrate on the lumbar region until warmth is felt.

Note: Lay the palms on the lumbar region in a resting attitude. Breathe lightly, softly, evenly, and slowly. Practice mental abstraction, hovering between existence and non-existence. Repeat the exercise several times.

Body, breath, and mind regulation should be natural and moderate, somewhere between rigorous Qigong practice and everyday life, in order to realize the condition of perfect rest. This exercise helps regulate the autonomic nervous system and improves parasympathetic activity. Applying the hands to the Yaoyan point in the small of the back helps preserve the normal curve of the

lumbar vertebrae, and, because the "waist is the storehouse of the kidney," it has the function of strengthening the waist and supplementing the kidney.

II. Application

Post standing is practiced mainly in a standing posture. During practice, the upper body and four limbs are kept in a fixed posture to train the static force of the muscles and to keep the mind focused. On the one hand, it helps relax the central nervous system and improve the self-controlling ability of the autonomic nervous system and coordination of the peripheral nervous system. The enhancement of the overall function of the nervous system contributes to the balance and harmony within the body. On the other hand, it promotes blood circulation, improves blood supply to the organs and tissues, and increases the amount of blood flowing back to the heart, strengthening the metabolism. Thus, this form has been recognized as an important practice for strengthening the body.

This form is mainly effective for neurasthenia and high blood pressure. In addition, its therapeutic effects on abscesses, arthropathy, diabetes, and chronic parenchyma injury are also evident. Practitioners who are elderly, ill, or weak are recommended to choose among the resting, natural, and three-circle styles. The young and strong are recommended to choose among the resting, natural, downward pressing, and three-circle styles and gradually adopt lower postures or more difficult styles, such as the Shaolin sword finger and subduing tiger methods.

During the course of practice, the three aspects—body, breath, and mind—become fused into one, that is, "the unity of three in one." As one progresses in the training, emphasis on the physical aspects will gradually be replaced by the mental aspect, described as "seek only spiritual satisfaction and not postural perfection." In terms of breathing, one may adopt natural breathing in the initial stage, but as the student progresses in their understanding, gradually integrate the breath with the mental aspect to experience the higher states of Qigong practice.

Everyone's physical condition and capacity for perseverance is different, especially patients who are still recovering. Thus, a reasonable intensity of training should be determined based on the individual's condition. Excessive practice may damage the right Qi due to intensive coursing and discharging, while too little practice may not be sufficient to stimulate and regulate the right Qi. The intensity of training is determined by the posture, time, training sessions, duration, and the content and strength of mental commitment.

The beginner may choose one style for practice, starting with 15 minutes, and gradually increasing to as much as 60 minutes 2–3 times a day, with 1–3 months as a complete course. It is advisable to keep the mind free and unencumbered. If no adverse reactions are felt, increase the intensity of training. If reactions occur, but they are not serious enough to affect practice, continue. If reactions are so violent that one may not be able to live and work normally, or illness worsens, it is wise to stop training. Try to discover the reason first, and then decide whether to continue the practice or not.

8. Relaxation Qigong (放松功)

As a static Qigong style, Relaxation Qigong aims to achieve a relaxed, comfortable, and natural state through intentional relaxation. By eliminating random thoughts, this form relieves anxiety, tension, and physical and mental fatigue and restores vigor and vitality. This method can free the channels and network vessels and harmonize the internal organs; it can therefore be used to improve health, and prevent and cure diseases.

Drawing its inspiration from ancient meditation traditions, Relaxation Qigong emphasizes the importance of turning the mind inward, conducting the Qi with the mind, and breathing slowly, smoothly, and continuously. Though the title did not come into being until modern times, there have been some similar forms in history, such as "keeping still" and "sitting in stillness" mentioned in *Fine Prescriptions of Su's and Shen's* or *Su Shen Liang Fang* (苏沈良方).[10] Others, such as the "relaxation method" introduced by Ding Fubao (丁福保) in modern times, or "progressive relaxation therapy" in America, "relaxation reaction" in Japan, or "auto-suggestion relaxation training" in the former Soviet Union, are all similar to Relaxation Qigong.

This form is reliable, effective, and easy to learn and practice, and requires no special facilities. It can be practiced standing, sitting, lying, and walking, and as a basic meditation for the healthy or a rehabilitative therapy for patients. It promotes Qi and blood circulation and the metabolism, making it a desirable form for patients with high blood pressure and/or coronary heart disease.

I. Practice Method

A. Intentional Relaxation Sequence

The Intentional Relaxation Sequence coordinates conscious regulation of the cerebral cortex with the breath through head-to-toe, sequential, or local relaxation. The following are some of the most popular varieties.

1. Relaxation for Free Circulation Form

This practice consciously relaxes the body from head to toe by turning the vision, mind, and hearing inwardly, combined with silently pronouncing the word "relax" while visualizing relaxation spreading like leavened dough, water waves, or electrical waves over the entire body, and experiencing the feeling of relaxation.

1. Posture: Choose among standing, sitting, lying, or walking postures.
2. Breathing: Use natural or abdominal breathing.
3. Mind: Relax in the following order: head, neck, shoulder, upper arms, elbows, forearms, wrists, hands, chest and back, lumbar and abdominal regions, hips, thighs, knees, lower legs, ankles, and feet.

When mentally focusing on each area, pronounce continuously and visualize "relax" three times. Men should place the left hand under the right, and women the right under the left, and then lightly press them against the abdomen. Inwardly focus the mind, vision, and listening on the navel. Now inwardly focus the mind, vision, and listening on the Dantian, 3 cun below the navel. Next, inwardly focus the mind, vision, and listening on the Mingmen (DU-4), between the kidneys. Stand still for a short while until the mouth fills with saliva, and then swallow it in three gulps and conduct it to the Dantian. This is called "the jade liquid returning elixir." Afterwards, rub the hands together until very warm and then massage the face and comb the hair with them. Gently move the neck, shoulders, and waist and walk about for a while to end the practice.

Note: During practice, focus the vision, mind, and hearing inwardly. When keeping the mind on a certain body part, silently chant "relax" and imagine it expanding like leavened dough. Feelings of relaxation and expansiveness are the key to this practice. Feelings of looseness, lightness, or openness are all effects of relaxing.

Relaxation is a prerequisite for free circulation of the Qi; and free circulation of Qi is the key to curing diseases. Unobstructed circulation enables turbid Qi to descend and clear Qi to rise so that the Qi and blood circulate smoothly and the body moves agilely.

Swallowing saliva strengthens the stomach and promotes digestion. Hence, it can treat indigestion. Moreover, it nourishes and supplements essence Qi, and facilitates the ascending movement of the kidney Water and the descending movement of the heart Fire to harmonize Water and Fire. It also fulfills the *Dao De Jing*'s admonition to "fill the abdomen and empty the heart/mind."

2. Tri-Line Relaxation Sequence

This sequence aims at relaxing the three lines, the bilateral line, anterior line, and posterior line, each with nine relaxation areas and four resting points. The relaxation sequence proceeds from top to bottom along the three lines. This practice is suitable for beginners, who have difficulty concentrating, and is a basic exercise in Relaxation Qigong.

The first line or bilateral line: Relax in the following order: two sides of the head, two sides of the neck, both shoulders, both upper arms, both elbow joints, both forearms, both wrists, both hands, and ten fingers. The resting point on this line is Zhongchong (PC-9) at the tip of the middle finger.

The second line or anterior line: Relax in the following order: face, anterior of the neck, chest, abdomen, anterior of the thighs, knee joints, anterior of the lower legs, dorsa of the two feet, and ten toes. The resting point on this line is Yinbai (SP-1) of the big toe for 1–2 minutes.

The third line or posterior line: Relax in the following order: occipital region of the head, posterior of the neck, upper back, lower back, posterior of the two thighs and the knees, calves, heels, and soles. The resting point on this line is the Yongquan point (KI-1) in the soles for 1–2 minutes.

The sequence is illustrated in Figure 6.7.

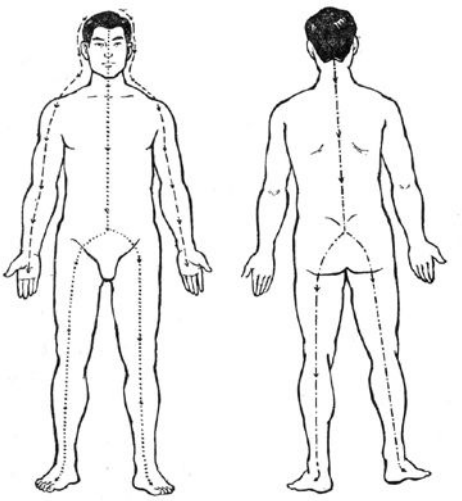

Figure 6.7 Tri-Line Relaxation Sequence. This sequence aims at relaxing the three lines, bilateral line, anterior line, and posterior line, each with nine relaxation areas and four resting points. It is a basic exercise in Relaxation Qigong

When practicing, besides adjusting the body and the mind as required for static Qigong, one should close the mouth and eyes naturally and focus on one body part while inhaling, and then silently chant "relax" while exhaling. Repeat it with the focus on the next body part following the relaxation sequence for each line until every body part on the three lines is totally relaxed. After relaxing each line, keep the mind and hold it on its resting point for 1–2 minutes. After the three lines are all relaxed, focus the mind and hold it on the fourth resting point, the lower Dantian beneath the navel, for 3–4 minutes to end one cycle of the practice. One cycle or 2–3 cycles equals one time practice. The closing movements are opening the eyes and rubbing the hands.

It is easier for beginners to relax in lying or sitting postures. Skilled practitioners may adopt any posture, including standing, sitting, lying, or walking.

Start with natural breathing and gradually progress to abdominal breathing; prolonged exhaling and short inhaling are required for both natural and abdominal breathing methods.

3. Segmental Relaxation Qigong

Divide the body into segments and relax them from top to bottom in either of two typical sequences:

1. Head, shoulders, arms, hands, chest, abdomen, legs, and feet.
2. Head, neck, arms, chest, abdomen, back, waist, thighs, calves, and feet.

Focus the mind on one area and silently chant "relax" 2–3 times before moving on to the next. After completing 2–3 rounds of relaxation, focus the mind on the navel. This method involves fewer body parts and is suitable for beginners who have difficulty memorizing the parts in Tri-Line Relaxation.

4. Localized Relaxation Qigong

After relaxing the whole body using Tri-Line Relaxation, focus the mind on the diseased part or localized area of tension and silently chant "relax" 20–30 times. This practice is suitable for practitioners who are skilled in the Tri-Line Relaxation but have strained areas, such as the eyes, due to glaucoma, or the hepatic region, due to hepatopathy.

5. Holistic Relaxation Qigong

Take the whole body as a single unit and relax in one of the following three ways:

1. Imagine relaxing from top to bottom, like the downward flowing of water.
2. Chant "relax" and expand the feeling of relaxation from the navel to the entire body.
3. Imagine relaxing the body along the three lines in the Tri-Line Relaxation. Relax the lines one by one, from top to bottom, without interruption, like the downward flowing of water.

This sequence is suitable for practitioners familiar with the Tri-Line Relaxation or Segmental Relaxation and who are capable of regulating the body and emotions. Beginners who have difficulty practicing Tri-Line or Segmental Relaxation, or patients with liver Yang hyperactivity or Fire hyperactivity due to Yin deficiency caused by upper body repletion and lower body vacuity, may also resort to this sequence.

6. Backward-Walking Relaxation Qigong

Relax the front and back line of the body by walking backward.

The back line: This includes the soles, heels, back of the calves, back of the knees, back of the thighs, coccyx, back of the waist, the back, the nape of the neck, the back of the head, and the vertex.

The front line: This includes the soles, dorsa of feet, front of calves, knees, front of thighs, the abdomen, chest, neck, face, and vertex.

B. Vibrating Relaxation Qigong

Stand naturally and breathe evenly. Imagine that the body is penetrable like a net and that the pathogenic and turbid Qi is being expelled into the earth. Vibrate and shake the entire body—wrists, ankles, and heels—in particular, at a frequency of 130–150 vibrations per minute for 2–5 minutes each round. Stand still for 3–6 minutes afterwards. The practitioner may also shake for a longer period, depending on the individual's condition, or move on to practice other static or dynamic forms.

Clinical application has proved that the rhythmic vibration of the body plays a significant role in unblocking the meridians and promoting the downward flow of Qi and regulating the Qi. This sequence is a skillful combination of stillness and motion. If practiced alone persistently, it will not only improve health, but also has a remarkable effect on ascendant hyperactivity of liver Yang or upper body repletion and lower body vacuity, high blood pressure, neurosis, vesicular and tension headaches, and menopausal syndrome. Shaking is often

taken as a preparatory exercise to enhance calmness and relaxation before training in other Qigong styles.

C. Slapping Relaxation Qigong

This style is suitable for beginners or those who have failed to benefit from other relaxation practices. Slapping is considered an easy way to gain Qigong benefits, since it affects the internal regulating system through external stimulus. If practiced along with acupoint massage, better effects can be attained. Rhythmic slapping should be conducted in order from head to feet and part by part, while silently chanting "relax."

Slap in the following sequence: head, neck, shoulders, elbows, the back of the hands, back of the fingers, chest and abdomen, back and lumbar region, hips, thighs, knees, the back of the feet, and toes.

II. Application

Relaxation Qigong represents the fundamentals of Qigong and is the basis for attaining higher levels of meditation. The practice has a wide range of benefits. It can be practiced by white-collar workers to relieve mental fatigue, by manual workers to alleviate muscle tension, and by college students to ease fatigue, improve memory, and reduce anxiety before an exam. Patients suffering from insomnia or having difficulty falling asleep may expect improved sleep after practicing this form. Relaxation Qigong performs special regulating and healing functions on those with less than ideal health. Clinical application has proved its therapeutic effects on high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, glaucoma, neurosis, digestive disorders, asthma, and pain induced by various causes.

9. Internal Nourishing Qigong (内养功)

Internal Nourishing Qigong is a static form focused mainly on Tu-Na (breathing) and became popular at the end of the Ming and beginning of the Qing dynasties. There were more efforts made to research and standardize the form after the founding of the People's Republic of China. Decades of clinical trials have demonstrated the notable therapeutic effects of Internal Nourishing Qigong on digestive disorders, respiratory diseases, and a variety of other

chronic problems. It is simple, efficient, and safe, and is indeed an excellent form of Medical Qigong therapy.

In terms of its practice, Internal Nourishing Qigong includes two practice methods of static Qigong and dynamic Qigong. It requires "integrating the posture, the breathing, and the mind" throughout the entire practice and emphasizes interval breathing, silent chanting, the lifting and lowering of the tongue, and gathering Qi in the Dantian. Coordinating interval breathing or imbalanced breathing with mental intention is the practice focus of Internal Nourishing Qigong. The form is characterized by the contrast of the stillness of the brain and the movement of the internal organs. Internal Nourishing Qigong can calm the spirit, supplement the source Qi, balance Yin and Yang, harmonize Qi and blood, free the channels and network vessels, and coordinate the internal organs. Its effect can be achieved through specific training of the posture, breathing, and mind.

The following is an introduction of the five relaxation and silence methods from the beginner level of static Qigong and the three inhale-pause-exhale methods from the middle level of static Qigong.

I. Practice Method

A. The Beginner Level: Building the Foundation by Relaxation and Silence

1. Body Adjustment

This practice has three postures: supine, leaning-sitting, and relaxed standing.

1. Supine posture: Assume the supine position in bed. Rest the head on a pillow of appropriate height to ensure that the head and neck remain straight, level, and comfortable. Extend the arms naturally on both sides of the body or one on top of another above the navel. Extend the legs naturally with the heels touching and tips of the toes comfortably open. Inhale and exhale through the nose. Close the eyes lightly or open them slightly allowing one trace of light through but containing the spirit in.
2. Leaning-sitting posture: Sit on a sofa or in bed with the neck and back cushioned and lean against the back of the sofa or the headboard of the bed. Make sure there is no empty space between the neck, back, and the object being leant against. Place hands lightly on the armrests of the sofa or on the Dantian area with the hands held together. Bend or keep straight both legs as feels most natural. Close the eyes and mouth lightly, and inhale and exhale through the nose.

3. Calm and relaxed standing posture: Stand naturally with the feet shoulder-width apart and parallel to each other. Bend the knees slightly and relax the back and the hips. Tighten the abdominal muscles and buttocks. Hang both shoulders and arms on each side of the body with a slight empty space under the armpits and fingers pointed down. Tuck the chin in a slightly and pull the top of the head, Baihui up. Close the eyes lightly, and inhale and exhale through the nose.

2. Breathing Adjustment

While practicing static Qigong at the beginner level, start with natural breathing and gradually progress to abdominal breathing when practice skills are improved. Breathing combines with silently chanting "silence" and "relax" in order to achieve relaxation and tranquilization, as well as building the foundation for the relatively complicated inhale-pause-exhale breathing method in the middle level of practice.

1. Natural breathing: Breathe naturally as for normal breathing.
2. Abdominal breathing: Abdominal breathing is characterized by the rise and fall of the abdomen with breathing. Abdominal breathing can be further divided into regular abdominal breathing and reverse abdominal breathing. In regular abdominal breathing, the abdomen expands during inhalation and retracts upon exhalation. In reverse abdominal breathing, the chest expands and becomes full, the abdomen retracts or caves in during inhalation and the chest returns to normal, and the abdomen expands and becomes full during exhalation. No matter what type of abdominal breathing, each has the same purpose of pursuing smooth, even, fine, slow, deep, and prolonged breathing. Forcefully prolonging the breathing to only achieve the rise and fall of the abdomen will cause body discomfort, which should be avoided.

3. Mind Adjustment

Use the method of Yishou or "keep the mind on" here, including "keep the mind on unfixed locations" and "keep the mind on a fixed location." "Keep the mind on unfixed locations" should combine with the five relaxation and silence Qigong forms, and "keep the mind on a fixed location" is focusing the mind on the lower elixir, or Dantian, and the Qihai point is the focusing center.

1. Keep the mind on unfixed locations:
    a. Spread-descend method: Keep the mind on and imagine the energy is spreading from one center point or one center axis (one body part) outward while inhaling; in the meantime silently chant

"silence," and let oneself calm down and enter tranquility as quickly as possible. Keep the mind on and imagine the body relaxation spreading from the top downward while exhaling; in the meantime silently chant "relax" and experience the feeling and the effect of relaxation.

b. Gather-descend method: Keep the mind on and imagine the fresh energy contained in Qi gathering inward to one center point or one center axis of the body while inhaling. Keep the mind on and imagine the relaxation spreading from the top of the body downward while exhaling and chanting, which is the same practice as in (a).

c. Ascend-descend method: For entire body practice, keep the mind on and imagine the energy ascending from the feet upward to the Tanzhong point, the upper elixir level, while inhaling. Keep the mind on and imagine the relaxation spreading downward from the Baihui point, the top of the head, to the feet. For special body area practice, the bottom line of the special body area should be the starting level from which the energy spreads upward to the top line of this area, and the top line of the special body area is the starting level from which the relaxation descends downward to the bottom line. Breathing and chanting methods are the same as above.

d. Spread-gather method: Keep the mind on and imagine the energy spreading from one center point or one center axis of the body outward while inhaling. Keep the mind on and imagine the mind gathering and the body relaxing inward toward the center point or center axis of the body. Other practice methods are the same as above.

e. Gather-dispel method: Keep the mind on and imagine the fresh energy contained in Qi gathering in toward the center point or the center axis of the body while inhaling. Keep the mind on and imagine the turbid Qi and diseased Qi spreading and dispelling out of the body leading the entire body relaxed while exhaling.

Select a few methods accordingly, practice them for 10–15 minutes, and then practice "keep the mind on a fixed location" to nourish the Qi.

2. Keep the mind on a fixed location: This is the method of "Dantian Yishou," which aims to keep the mind on the lower elixir field, an area in the lower abdomen with the Shenque point as its upper border, the Guanyuan point as its lower border, and the Qihai point as its center,

that is a similar size to one's fist. Keep the mind on this field lightly for 5–10 minutes to nourish the body and spirit, and tonify the original Qi.

This beginner level of Qigong practice can build up the foundation for middle-level practice and enable the practitioners in the middle level to relax the body and enter the tranquil state quickly. It can also be used as preparatory and correcting Qigong forms.

B. The Middle Level: Inhale-Pause-Exhale Breathing Adjustment Method

1. Body Adjustment

Besides the postures used for the beginner level, add the lateral recumbent posture, tail-high or Wei-Gao (尾高) posture, plane sitting posture, and reclining posture or Zhuang-Shi (壮式).

1. Lateral recumbent posture: One may lie on either side. Since lying on the right side is more common, let us take the right side as an example. Assume the lateral recumbent posture in bed. Rest the head on a pillow comfortably and keep the natural curve of the body. Incline the head slightly forward and bend the waist and back a little to draw in the chest and straighten the back. Bend the right arm naturally and lay it by the ear, 2 cun from the head, with palm facing up and the five fingers extended. Stretch the left arm naturally over the left hip, with left palm facing down and fingers relaxed. Extend the right leg naturally, bend the left knee 120°, and place the left knee on top of the right one. Close the eyes lightly or keep them slightly open. Inhale and exhale through the nose. If lying on the left side, reverse these directions.

   Regarding lying on the right side or on the left side, one may choose either side based on individual preference and physical condition. Right side lying is easy for gastric emptying and reducing the stress for the heart due to a heavy stomach. Therefore, it is recommended for those with gastroatonia, gastric dysperistalsis, slow gastric emptying, or heart problems. Left side lying is recommended for those suffering from prolapsed gastric mucosa.

2. Tail-high posture or Wei-Gao Wei Shi (尾高位式): It is similar to the supine posture. The differences are: an object about 10 cm high is placed under one's buttocks so that the practitioner's body shape is like a saddle of a horse. Stretch both legs comfortably or bend both legs with both feet drawn in toward the hips. Keep the knees together, with feet shoulder-width apart and parallel to each other, forming a three-

dimensional triangle. This is a special posture used to treat prolapsed internal organs.

3. Plane sitting posture: Sit up on a stool. Keep the upper body and back straight, draw in the chest, tuck the chin in slightly, and hold the head erect with Baihui pointed up. Relax the shoulders and sink the elbows. Place the hands naturally on top of the thighs with the palms facing down. Keep the feet shoulder-width apart and parallel to each other, with knee joints bent at 90° and the lower legs vertical to the ground. Close both eyes lightly, and hold the spirit in. Inhale and exhale through the nose.
4. Reclining posture or Zhuang-Shi (壮式): Lie in bed in the supine position, but with the pillow under the head 25–30 cm higher and with a cushion placed underneath the shoulders and upper back as a ramp; make sure there is no empty space under the upper back. Extend both arms naturally on each side of the body with the palms touching the lateral sides of the thighs. Extend the legs naturally with the heels touching each other and the toes pointed up. This posture is relatively difficult, and is often used toward the end of a course of treatment to reinforce the treatment effect and to further improve the strength of the body.

2. Breathing Adjustment

The standard posture and mind training are requested for the middle level of Qigong practice, but adjusting the breathing is even more emphasized at this level. Through the training of various imbalanced "pause-breath" breathing methods, the practitioner is not only able to harmonize the breathing, but also able to gradually achieve the effect of better regulated brain cortex function and central nervous system, and better coordinated sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system function, as well as able to correct imbalanced Yin-Yang function and reach a new level of well-balanced Yin-Yang function of the body.

There are five types of "pause-breath" breathing method in the middle level of static Qigong practice. Clinically used basic "pause-breath" breathing methods are normally the soft breathing method and hard breathing method. The soft breathing method is also known as the method of nourishing Yin, which is inhale-exhale-pause. The hard breathing method is the method of tonifying Yang, which is inhale-pause-exhale. The third type of "pause-breath" breathing method is inhale-pause-inhale-exhale, also known as the method of tonifying Yin and Yang, and is more suited to frail older people and people with severe illness who are not able to practice dynamic Qigong.

1. Soft breathing method (the method of nourishing Yin)—inhale-exhale-pause: Breathe through the nose, or inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. As you inhale, conduct the Qi downward to the abdomen and expand it; when breathing out, retract the abdomen slowly. At the end of exhalation, take a pause (hold the breath) and keep the abdomen motionless for a moment. The soft breathing method is suitable for those with chronic hepatitis, early stage of cirrhosis, habituated constipation, hypertension, atrophic gastritis, decreased gastrointestinal function, chronic bronchitis, and asthma.
2. Hard breathing method (the method of tonifying Yang)—inhale-pause-exhale: Close the eyes and mouth lightly and breathe through the nose. While inhaling, conduct the Qi downward to the abdomen and expand it. Pause a moment, and then slowly exhale as you retract the abdomen. The hard breathing method is suitable for those with gastric ulcers, duodenal ulcers, gastroptosis, chronic gastroenteritis, pyloristenosis, diarrhea, and hypotension.
3. The breathing method of tonifying Yin and Yang—inhale-pause-inhale-exhale: This breathing method is relatively difficult, but it is more effective for the conditions of the digestive and pulmonary systems. Breathe through the nose and inhale a little air. Take a pause for a while. Continue to inhale. And then breathe out slowly.

Selection of the breathing method: The soft breathing method nourishes Yin and reduces Yang; it is suitable for those with the condition of Yin vacuity. The hard breathing method tonifies Yang and reinforces the energy, so it is applicable for those with the signs and symptoms of Yang vacuity. The third breathing method can be used by those with the condition of Yin and Yang vacuity. No matter which breathing method is selected, the duration of the pausing period and the length of the inhaling and exhaling should be perfectly controlled; it is regulating well the "Fire level" of the breathing to avoid any uncomfortable symptoms caused by improper breathing. In case the stuffiness and heaviness of the chest appears, it can be corrected by applying the relaxation and silence Qigong from the beginner's level.

4. Tongue up-and-down movements coordinate with the breathing methods: In the middle level of Qigong practice, coordinating with breathing, the tongue moves upward and downward, which is called "tongue up-and-down movements" or "tongue movements." "Tongue up-and-down movements" make the mind focused, dispel miscellaneous thoughts, stimulate plenty of saliva secretion, increase appetites, and facilitate the absorption and digestion of food. Tongue movements also

lead the monarch Fire down and Yin essences up so that the Water rises and the Fire descends and Water and Fire are well-communicated. The lung, spleen, and heart meridians all go to the tongue; therefore, the tongue movements regulate the meridians of the lung, the spleen, and the heart, and invigorate the Qi and blood circulation.

Tongue movements coordinating with the soft breathing method: While inhaling, raise the tongue against the upper palate; lower the tongue while exhaling; and keep the tongue lowered and not moving while pausing the breathing.

Tongue movements coordinating with the hard breathing method: While inhaling, raise the tongue against the upper palate; keep the tongue against the upper palate without moving while pausing the breathing; and lower the tongue while exhaling.

Tongue movements coordinating with the breathing method of tonifying Yin and Yang: While inhaling, keep the tongue against the upper palate until exhaling, and lower the tongue while exhaling.

When plenty of saliva is produced in the mouth during the tongue movement practice, the practitioner must calm the mind, balance the Qi, swallow it slowly, and lead it down into the lower elixir, the Dantian, with mind focusing method, as in the ancient saying: "use the well-nourished essence from the food to irrigate the precious water in the pond."

5. Silent chanting coordinates with the breathing methods: Silent chanting is a very important skill of Internal Nourishing Qigong. The chosen words are easy, pleasant, and positive, and are silently chanted without sound and without vibrating the vocal cords. Silent chanting induces corresponding physiological effects and the rapid healing of disease and functional recovery through "focusing on one thought instead of ten thousand" through the hint of the selected words. The words selected clinically vary based on different individuals and different illnesses. For example, "I am quiet" and "relax with tranquility" can be adopted by those who tend to be anxious; "brain calm and organs active" can be used for those with the weak spleen function of transforming and transporting; "remain serene and empty; genuine Qi will follow" can be used for those with Qi and blood vacuity; "gather Qi in the Dantian" or "soothe Qi in the chest" can be used for those with liver Qi stagnation; "lower the blood sugar" and "urine is clear" can be used for diabetic patients; and so on.

   You may start with three words for chanting, but as you become more skilled in the practice, and as your breathing becomes soft,

smooth, deep, and prolonged, you may increase the number of words to a maximum of nine. For example, "practice makes one healthier" or "with consistent practice, my health will improve."

Silent chanting coordination with the breathing methods: When three words are selected, silently chant one word during each breathing period of inhaling, exhaling, and pausing; when more than four words are selected, silently chant one word during inhaling, another during exhaling, and the rest of the words during the pausing period.

Silent chanting coordination with the soft breathing method: Silently chant the first word while inhaling; silently chant the second word while exhaling; and silently chant the rest of the words while pausing. For example, for "practice makes one healthier," silently chant "practice" while inhaling, "makes" while exhaling, and "one healthier" while pausing.

Silent chanting coordination with the hard breathing method: Silently chant the first word while inhaling, silently chant all the words in the middle while pausing, and silently chant the last word while exhaling. For example, for "silent, light, empty, and nothing," silently chant "silent" while inhaling, "light, empty" while pausing, and "nothing" while exhaling.

Silent chanting coordination with the breathing method of tonifying Yin and Yang: There are more ways of coordination here, but the normal way is to select three words for chanting, use each word during inhaling, pausing, and inhaling, and then exhale slowly.

The rhythm and the speed of the breathing and the duration of the pause are affected by silent chanting. There is no standard requirement for the length of a silent chant, but the intervals between each word should be the same. The length of the pausing period can be increased and the number of words can be increased as well when one becomes more skillful with practice. Beginners should not focus on chanting more words, as this may cause stuffiness and heaviness of the chest. It is required that all aspects are coordinated, including posture, mind focusing, tongue movement, and the "pause-breath" method of abdominal breathing, which is relatively difficult for the beginners. One should progress gradually, step by step, and not being impatient or urgently pursuing success. Patients with illness should practice the selected Qigong form specifically targeting the individual illness first. For example, practice silent chanting first for those patients who have difficulty calming down, increase the tongue movements for those who suffer from indigestion, and simply practice the breathing method of "pause-breath" for weak elderly patients who have difficulty when increasing silent chanting or tongue movement.

3. Mind Adjustment

Adjust the mind with the method of "keeping the mind on." The areas of keeping the mind on are the Dantian, Yongquan (KI-1), Danzhong (CV-17), and an external object or scenery.

1. Keep the mind on the Dantian**:** This is the same as the practice for the beginner's level.
2. Keep the mind on the Yongquan point: Lightly close the eyes, leaving a line of light between the upper and lower eyelids, and gaze at the big toe through the line of light. Practitioners who prefer to keep their eyes closed may visualize the shape of the big toe in the mind. This can be selected for those with increased blood pressure, liver Yang rising, or for those who tend to be over-focused on the Dantian while keeping the mind on it. The Mingmen (GV-4) and Zusanli (ST-36) points can also can be selected as the areas of keeping the mind on, based on the individual condition.
3. Keep the mind on the Danzhong: Women can often keep the mind on the Danzhong point between the breasts, especially during the menstrual period, to prevent prolonged menstruation, or heavy bleeding. This area is also selected for certain illnesses or at certain stages of Qigong practice.
4. Keep the mind on an external object or scenery: The method of keeping the mind on external scenery (such as flowers, the sea, and the moon) can be selected for those beginners who have many wandering thoughts and have difficulty in keeping the mind on the Dantian, or for those who are anxious or depressed.

The area to keep the mind on is normally the Dantian. Keeping the mind on the Dantian can supplement the original Qi, eliminate miscellaneous thoughts, and concentrate the mind by following the rhythmic breathing and the rising and falling movement of abdominal muscles. However, no matter which area or object, the practitioner should not make too much effort when keeping the mind on; keep the mind on the area softly, linger, and go on naturally.

Practice time for the middle-level static form of Internal Nourishing Qigong is 45–60 minutes. Toward the end of the practice, one should stop the silent chanting and tongue movement and change the breathing method from "pause-breath" abdominal breathing to slow, soft, even, and harmonized natural breathing in order to nourish the Qi in the Dantian. While nourishing the Qi, one should feel the warmth and fullness in the Dantian area, and imagine oneself becoming relaxed and naturally tranquil and as if the whole body were

immersed in a pond of warm water full of peace, joy, and light—relaxed and comfortable. Stop the practice after 5–10 minutes of quietly nourishing the true original Qi of the Dantian.

In order to avoid stopping the practice too quickly, one should leave the Qigong state gradually at the end of practice, start to move the body instead of staying still, open the eyes first, rub the hands until warm, rub the face with both hands, tap the teeth, swallow the saliva, rub the abdomen, the waist, and the girdle meridian, and then stop the practice.

II. Application

Internal Nourishing Qigong has remarkable effects on digestive disorders, such as peptic ulcers, gastroptosis, prolapse of gastric mucosa, hepatitis, and chronic constipation. Other indications for it are respiratory diseases, such as pulmonary tuberculosis, and many other types of chronic disease. Modern research has shown that it exerts a positive controlling effect on the cerebral cortex, improves gastrointestinal peristalsis, digestion, and absorption, promotes the secretion of digestive glands, and regulates the respiratory and immune systems.

Internal Nourishing Qigong has been esteemed as an effective traditional form for fitness, promoting health, and preventing and treating diseases. It is quick to take effect and convenient to practice. Patients practicing for therapeutic purposes should practice for 20–40 minutes each time, 2–4 times a day, and for three months as one course.

10. Roborant Qigong (强壮功)

Drawing its inspiration from the ancient Buddhist, Daoist, Confucian, and other methods of training, Roborant Qigong is an eclectic system based on taking the best of various styles. It also represents the fundamental stage of inner elixir training. The practice is known for its effect on nourishing the Qi, increasing strength, strengthening the kidney, and reinforcing the root. Hence, it is often used to strengthen the body, improve health, increase intelligence, and cultivate temperament. In addition, its therapeutic effects on diseases of the nervous system, among other things, are quite remarkable.

I. Practice Method

A. Body Adjustment

The practitioner may choose among the following five postures: natural cross-legged, half-lotus, full-lotus, standing (Low, Medium, and High Post Standing), and free postures.

1. Natural Cross-Cegged Sitting Posture

Sit in a cross-legged pose on a cushion with the left leg over the right or the right over the left. The soles rest on the seat, soles facing away from and behind you, and the thighs rest on the calves. Keep the neck erect, upper body straight, eyes lightly closed, and head slightly lowered to relax the neck muscles. Draw in the chest, straighten the back, and slightly push the hips backward. Let the upper arms hang naturally, clasp the four fingers of the hands together, or lay one hand in the palm of the other on top of the legs in front of the abdomen.

2. Half-Lotus Sitting Posture

Sit cross-legged with the left calf on top of the right, the back of the left foot against the right thigh, and the soles facing up. Alternatively lay the right calf on top of the left, with the back of the right foot against the left thigh, and the soles facing up. One may choose either way to sit, based on individual preference. The rest is the same as the natural cross-legged sitting posture.

3. Full-Lotus Posture

Lay the right calf on top of the left, and then take the left calf and bring it around to rest on the right, so that the two legs are crossed over each other, with the feet on the thighs and soles facing up. The rest is the same as the natural cross-legged sitting posture.

4. Standing Posture

High Post Standing: Stand with the feet shoulder-width apart. Bend the knees a little and relax the hips. Keep the eyes lightly closed. Inhale and exhale through the nose. Lower the head slightly with the Baihui point facing the sky. Draw in the chest and straighten the back. Relax the shoulders and sink the elbows, bend the arms a little, and hold the fingers open in front of the body. Raise the forearms to chest level (the same height as the Danzhong point) and assume the ball-holding posture.

Medium Post Standing: The same as High Post Standing except that you raise the arms to the Zhongwan point level, above the navel, and assume the ball-holding posture.

Low Post Standing: The same as High Post Standing except that you raise the arms to the level below the navel and assume the ball-holding posture.

The standing form can be practiced either indoors or outdoors. A quiet and clean spot with plenty of fresh air that facilitates the attainment of tranquility is preferable.

5. Free Posture

No fixed posture is required in the free posture. One may adjust the posture, breathing, and attitude depending on the surroundings and one's physical and mental state. When fatigued or under pressure, these adjustments help relax the body and mind, relieve stress, and improve efficiency.

B. Breathing Adjustment

The practitioner may choose among three types of breathing: quiet breathing, deep breathing, and reverse abdominal breathing. Breathe through the nose with the tongue against the palate. Patients with nasal congestion may inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth.

1. Quiet Breathing (Natural Breathing)

Breathe normally and naturally and pay no attention to your breathing.

This type of breathing is best for beginners, elderly practitioners, and patients with tuberculosis or anemia.

2. Deep Breathing (Mixed Prolonged Breathing)

While inhaling, expand both the chest and the abdomen. While exhaling, retract both the chest and the abdomen.

Note: Prolong and deepen the natural breathing to make it deep, long, calm, fine, and even. Practitioners need to be patient and follow the proper sequence. This style of breathing is not advised directly after meals.

Deep breathing is applicable to cases with neurasthenia, anemia, constipation, and those having difficulty concentrating.

3. Reverse Abdominal Breathing

While inhaling, expand the chest and retract the abdomen; while exhaling, retract the chest and distend the abdomen.

Note: Reverse abdominal breathing can only be achieved by a gradual process and through persistent practice of natural breathing. It takes time to make the breathing stable, even, calm, fine, deep, and long, so the practitioner should never use force.

This type of breathing is not suggested directly after meals. It is applicable for weak patients and those with lassitude, and for patients with organ potosis, irregular sympathetic nervous system, and heart conditions caused by an irregular nervous system.

C. Mind Adjustment

1. Keep the Mind On

Focus the mind on the lower Dantian to "bank up the kidney and secure the root." The practitioner may also adopt other subjects or body areas to keep the mind on, according to the physical condition, or use the method of imagination.

1. Keep the mind on the Dantian: Keep the mind on a ball-shaped area in the lower abdomen where the Qihai point is the center and the size equals the practitioner's fist. Do not concentrate too intently to avoid Qigong deviation.
2. Keep the mind on the Danzhong: Keep the mind on the Danzhong point in the chest area combining the High Post Standing posture. It is beneficial for patients with cardiac or pulmonary diseases, and patients with anemia or low blood pressure.
3. Keep the mind on the Zhongwan: Keep the mind on the Zhongwan point in the upper abdomen combining the Medium Post Standing posture. It is effective in treating patients with weak digestion, gastrointestinal conditions caused by an irregular nervous system, and vascular diseases.

2. Imagination

Conduct imagination according to the practitioner's illness condition or physical condition. *Daoist Canon by Wen Shi* or *Wen Shi Zhen Jing* (文始真经)[11] says: "Qi is induced by the mind. Contemplating a big fire, heat will be felt; contemplating flood, cold feelings will ensue." This is an example of the suggestive power of the imagination to create an ideal environment, hot, warm, cool, or cold, for the practitioner's condition. Thus, practitioners with a Yang vacuity may imagine a fireball in the abdomen, while those with a Yin vacuity may conjure up a brook.

II. Application

Roborant Qigong is most effective in treating diseases of the nervous system. Other indications for it are tension headache, sequela of cerebrovascular disease, neurasthenia, autonomic nerve disorder, and cardiac neurosis. Moreover, the form is also applicable to cases with cardiovascular diseases blood vascular diseases, nutritional disorders, metabolic diseases, gynecopathy, and renal or urogenital disorders.

For therapeutic purposes, one may practice Roborant Qigong 20–40 minutes for each session, 2–3 times a day, with 2–3 months as one course.

11. New Qigong Therapy (新气功疗法)

New Qigong Therapy was created on the basis of Hua Tuo's Five-Animal Frolics, with "movement" as the main method of practice. It is an organic fusion of the mental, breath, and physical aspects of traditional Daoyin, while making mental guidance the core of the entire form. New Qigong Therapy integrates motion and stillness: seeking stillness in motion and motion in stillness. "Wind breathing" is a unique characteristic of the form, and features fast, violent, and intense breathing. Practicing in the morning allows more oxygen to be inhaled, resulting in stronger internal Qi.

There are a variety of sequences in New Qigong Therapy, including: Fixed Position Wind Breathing; Rise-Fall Open-Close Slow Walking; Fast Walking; Natural Walking with Moderate Wind Breathing; One, Two, and Three Steps with Moderate Wind Breathing; Chanting Daoyin; and various kinds of combined massage techniques. Natural Walking with Moderate Wind Breathing is often adopted clinically for the prevention and treatment of common diseases, while One, Two, and Three Steps with Moderate Wind Breathing is used for preventing and treating cancer. Due to limitations of space, only these two sequences will be introduced here.

Natural Walking with Moderate Wind Breathing is so named because both the walking speed and breathing frequency are moderate and steady. Hence, it is suitable for patients with chronic diseases or cancer, but not those with severe heart problems. The sequence emphasizes the importance of being relaxed and natural, so patients practicing this method appear to be casually strolling. The key points for practice are: "roundness," "softness," and "remoteness." "Roundness" means that the postures and movements of the upper body and

limbs are rounded or curved, with a natural attitude, circular movements, and continuity of power. "Softness" means keeping the movements of all parts of the body relaxed, soft, and flexible, including the shoulder, head, neck, trunk, hip, and leg. "Remoteness" means looking forward without focusing on any specific objects, regardless of whether the eyes are kept open or closed. The learner should be cautious not to drop the head and look at the ground. Good results can be expected by following these three-word instructions.

I. Practice Method

A. Natural Walking Qigong with Moderate Wind Breathing

1. Preparatory Sequence

1. Calm and relaxed standing: Stand with feet parallel to each other and shoulder-width apart. Bend the knees slightly but keep them behind the tips of the toes. Relax the hips and knees and distribute your weight equally between the two feet. Let the arms hang naturally at your sides, with the fingers slightly bent. Sink the shoulders and elbows, and keep the armpit hollow and wrist relaxed. Draw in the chest, straighten the back, and suspend the Baihui from above. Relax the waist, contract the abdomen, and lower the hips. Look straight ahead for a while and then slowly close the eyes. Press the tongue against the palate and maintain a natural bearing.

   Calm and relaxed standing is the basic posture for New Qigong Therapy. It helps the practitioner to calm the mind and promotes the Qi and blood circulation. It is essential for practitioners to follow the key points conscientiously while practicing.

2. Three Qi breathing from the middle Dantian: "Qi breathing" means inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth. After assuming a calm and relaxed standing posture, move the hands toward the middle Dantian from both sides, with palms facing each other and fingers pointing down. Gradually turn the palms over to face the abdomen at the level of the middle Dantian. Press the Laogong of one palm (male left, female right) on the abdomen and then cover it with the other hand, with the inner Laogong of the upper hand on top of the outer Laogong of the lower hand.

   Maintain this posture and begin the breathing technique. While exhaling through the mouth, squat slowly and lower the body. At the end of exhalation, keep the body still, and start to inhale through the nose. Hold the breath for a while after full inhalation and then raise

the body until the legs are straight. Now begin to exhale again. This breathing method is to exhale first and then inhale, which is a tonifying breathing method; thus it can address cases of vacuity syndrome due to chronic diseases. The sequence of breathing comprises one exhalation, one inhalation, and a pause. Repeat the movements three times.

Note: Follow the proper sequence in conducting the three breathing method. Do not force the lengthening or deepening of the breath or strain to fully inhale or exhale. When exhaling, keep the mouth opened slightly and relax the waist, hips, and knees. As you lower the body, exhale. The speed of lowering the body and the ultimate level depends on each individual's condition. Patients with hypertension, for example, are advised to squat more slowly, while patients with hypotension should not squat at all. After you have exhaled to a certain degree, begin to inhale, but maintain the body's posture, lest fullness in the chest should occur. Stand up straight only after inhalation ends. This breathing encourages the brain to gradually enter into a relaxed, controllable, and tranquil state, allowing the imbalanced functions of the brain to be regulated and fully restoring its position as the highest command center of the body.

3. Three openings and closings of the middle elixir: (i) Opening method—Resume natural breathing after the preceding sequence. Release the hands from the "embrace Dantian" posture and slowly return them to the sides of the body. To begin the "opening" movement, position the hands so that the backs of the hands face each other and the palms face out, with the fingers together. When the hands are a little more than shoulder-width, stop moving. This counts as one "opening." (ii) Closing method—Turn the palms over to face each other and bring them together in front of the abdomen until they are almost touching each other. This is referred to as the first closing. Repeat the opening and closing three times.

   Note: Focus on the Dantian during the openings and closings to generate source Qi, harmonize the blood vessels, and strengthen the spleen and stomach.

2. Movement

1. Stepping method: After the preceding sequence, slowly open the eyes, look straight ahead, and walk forward as if taking a stroll. The order of steps usually follows the principle of left for the male and right for the female (males step with the left foot first, and females step with

the right foot first). Patients may determine the order based on the syndromes. Hypertension and heart cases, for example, should step with the left foot first, irrespective of gender, whereas cases of hepatic disease should step with the right foot first. Cancer patients should step with the foot of the affected side first. For example, in stepping with the left foot first, when the left heel touches the ground, the sole naturally elevates, and then lays flat on the ground, as the weight shifts onto it. Then take the right foot, place the heel on the ground, allow the sole to elevate, and then lay it flat on the ground as the center of gravity shifts onto it. Repeat the movements as you continue to step forward.

Note: Take your steps rhythmically and avoid turning out the feet. Relax the waist and hips and look straight ahead (one may either keep the eyes open or closed). Eliminate random thoughts by looking without seeing and listening without hearing. Press the tongue against the palate to connect the governor and conception vessels. If saliva increases, retain it in the mouth and do not swallow until the closing movements, and certainly not while walking, lest choking occurs. Be sure to remove dentures before practice. Turn the head according to the twisting of the body. Take a step with the left foot, and when it is laid flat on the ground, shift the center of gravity onto it, while turning the head and upper body to the right. Relax the Tianzhu (BL-10) region, the nape of the neck, and the shoulders while turning the head. The pace of walking and duration of breath depends on the individual's condition and tolerance level.

2. Arm swinging: While stepping forward, swing the arms back and forth naturally. Take a step with the left foot. When the left heel touches the ground, let the right hand swing forward until it is in front of the middle Dantian and let the left hand swing naturally back to the left hip. When the left foot touches the ground, step forward with the right foot, and let the left arm swing until it is in front of the middle Dantian and the right one to the right hip. As you alternate stepping forward with the left and right feet, let the arms swing back and forth naturally.

   Note: When the left heel touches the ground, let the left hand swing to the left rear corner and the right hand towards the middle Dantian. When the left foot touches the ground, the right hand should be one fist length in front of the middle Dantian, while the left hand arrives at the side of the left hip. Take steps and swing arms in a natural and rhythmical manner. Relax the shoulders, elbows, wrists, and other joints in the body. Keep the armpits hollow and move the arms in a natural

curve, rather than keeping them stiff and straight. Hence the form is titled Natural Walking Sequence.

3. Breathing adjustment: The method of wind breathing is the regulating method adopted in the Natural Walking Sequence. Wind breathing uses the nose to inhale and exhale. Inhalation comes first, during which a slight breathing, or "wind," sound can be heard, but not loud enough for others to hear it. The duration of inhalation is shorter and heavier than that of the exhalation. Wind breathing in the Natural Walking Sequence consists of two inhalations and one exhalation, that is, inhale-inhale-exhale, coordinated with the steps. When the left heel touches the ground, inhale twice, and when the right heel touches the ground, exhale once. Breathe like this with every step.

   Note: The duration of the two inhalations should be basically the same as one exhalation. Keep the breathing rhythm natural to smooth the Qi and calm the spirit. Patients with hypertension or heart problems are advised to breathe naturally rather than using wind breathing.

3. Closing Movements

After 15 minutes of walking, return to the calm and relaxed standing posture for a while. Then start the three openings and closings at the middle Dantian and the three Qi breathing methods. Open your eyes after returning to calm and relaxed standing for another two minutes. This completes one section. One section starts with the preparatory method, proceeds to a 15-minute walk, and then ends with a simplified closing method. Rest for 5–10 minutes and then repeat the sequence once or twice.

B. One-Step, Two-Step, and Three-Step Moving Exercise with Moderate Wind Breathing

1. One-Step Moving Exercise with Moderate Wind Breathing

1. Preparatory posture: Same as above.
2. Stepping: How the first step is taken in this form depends on the condition of the individual's illness. As an example, step out with the left foot first. Shift the center of gravity to the right leg before stepping out to free the left foot, with the toes touching the floor raising the sole of the foot. Step forward with the left foot, and with a little force, lay the heel on the floor. Keep the knees slightly bent. Then lay the left foot flat on the ground. Afterwards, shift the weight to the left foot, freeing the right foot that is to be lifted by the heel. Move the right foot, and

let the toes lightly touch the floor, with 6–7 cm of distance from the middle point of the medial edge of the left foot. Relax the limbs, step forward with the right foot, and lay the heel on the floor first, in the same way as the left. Continue the same movement on the opposite side. Repeat the process on the two sides.

This form emphasizes alternating contact of the right (liver channel) and left (spleen channel) big toe with the ground. Thus it regulates Yin and Yang, stimulates channel Qi, and frees the channels.

3. Swinging the arms: Coordinate the swinging of the arms with the steps. When the left foot is free, with just the toes touching the floor, swing the right arm forward to the front of the middle Dantian, while the left hand moves back to the side of the hip. When the left foot steps out with the heel touching the floor, keep the right hand in front of the middle elixir and the left hand at the side of the hip.

   Continuing on the right side, when the right heel touches the floor, the left hand remains at the middle Dantian, while the right hand is at the side of the hip. When laying the right foot flat, swing the left hand to the left hip, while the right hand moves to the middle Dantian. Palms face towards the middle Dantian. Continue with the tips of the toes touching the floor. Repeat the process, alternating left and right.

4. Head turning: The same way as above.

5. Breathing: Stepping out with the left foot, for example, lay the heel on the floor, and inhale twice consecutively. Lay the left foot flat on the floor, and lift the right foot, with the toes touching the ground, while exhaling. Repeat on the right side. Following this pattern, coordinate the breathing with every step and every contact of the toes with the floor.

   Note: While practicing this exercise, besides the same key practice points for the previous form, pay attention to taking small steps, touching the ground lightly with the feet, turning the body and head over 90°, Baihui (GV-20) pointing upward, tapping the ground with the toes for every step, and completing one breathing cycle of inhale-inhale-exhale (inhaling when the heel is on the ground, exhaling when the toes are tapping the ground). Conduct one round of Middle Dantian Three Openings and Closings after every 20 minutes of walking to normalize the Qi. If the Qi does not normalize, perform another round of Middle Dantian Three Openings and Closings. You can practice three rounds of Moderate Wind Breathing Walking for a total of 60 minutes. After three rounds, carry out the closing exercise.

2. Two-Step Moving Exercise with Moderate Wind Breathing

1. Preparatory posture is the same as above.
2. Practice method: The footwork, arm swinging, head turning, breathing, and moderate wind breathing is basically the same as the One-Step exercise; however, there is a difference in the coordination of stepping and breathing. Thus, the emphasis here is on walking and respiration. With the left foot as an example, step out and lay the heel on the floor, while inhaling. When the left foot lays flat on the floor, lift the right foot, with the toes touching the floor, and inhale again. When the right foot lays flat, shift the weight to the right foot. Now with the weight off the left foot, lift the left foot, and with the toes of the left foot 6–7 cm from the right, lightly touch the ground, and exhale. Continue to step out with the left foot, and when the sole is flat, inhale. Following this, step out with the right foot, and when the heel touches the ground, inhale again. When the right sole lays flat, the left foot makes another toe-touching movement with exhalation. Proceed in the same manner step after step. The characteristic of this form is that whichever foot steps out first, that foot makes contact with the ground. After every 20 minutes of walking, normalize the Qi by performing three rounds of Middle Dantian Opening and Closing, and then continue the walking practice.

   Note: In this exercise the foot that steps out is the foot that taps the floor, you tap the ground with the toes once for every two steps, and you complete one cycle of the breathing of inhale-inhale-exhale (inhaling when the heel is on the ground, inhaling when the heel is on the ground again, and exhaling when the toes are tapping the ground), which makes it particularly suitable for patients with liver problems. These patients should first step out with the right foot when practicing. After one round of 20 minutes, normalize the Qi. Then step out with the left foot, complete one round, and normalize the Qi. Again, step out with the right foot and complete one round for a total of three rounds. After retracting the foot, stand with feet parallel, and do three opening and closing techniques. If breathing has not returned to normal, do the Three Qi Breathing form one more time.

3. Three-Step Moving Exercise with Moderate Wind Breathing

1. Preparatory posture: The same as above.
2. Practice method: Stepping out with the left foot, for example, touch the heel to the ground and raise the sole. Inhale once. When the left foot

is laid flat, the right foot steps out, with the heel touching the ground, and sole raised. Inhale again. When the right foot lays flat, step out with the left foot again. After touching down with the heel and flattening the sole on the ground, exhale. At this time, the left foot becomes solid and stable, while the right foot relaxes and loosens to the point where it can be lifted. Touch the floor with the tip of the right toes and change the breathing to the natural breathing method, which is called "normal." If the practitioner feels the stuffiness of the chest, conduct exhaling while touching the ground with the right toes; at the same time, turn the upper body 45° to the right. Keep the head upright and slightly turned towards the right rear. Look at the right shoulder. Performing this movement, along with touching the ground with the tips of the toes, conducts the Qi downward. Repeat the same process with the right foot. Walk forward in this manner alternating left and right one step at a time.

Note: A characteristic of this method is "one foot tap every three steps," tapping the ground with the foot behind with eyes looking backward over the shoulder. The purpose of this movement is to regulate Yin and Yang by leading the "internal Qi" downward from the head to the foot along the Yang meridians of the body (lateral sides), and then continue to go upward along the Yin meridians of the body (medial sides). Conduct one foot tapping coordinated with the "inhale, inhale, exhale, normalize" breathing pattern (inhaling when the heel is on the ground, inhaling when the heel is on the ground again, exhaling when the heel is on the ground, and breathing naturally when the toes are tapping the ground). Same as the above two forms, after every 20 minutes walking (one round), normalize the breathing, and then perform another round, with three rounds in total. Stand with feet flat on the ground and perform Middle Dantian Opening and Closing exercises. End with Three Qi Breathing to close your session. The breathing is slower and the steps are more stable in the Three-Step Moving Exercise than in the Two-Step Moving Exercise. Practicing this form with natural breathing may replace the slow walking.

The characteristics of the Moderate Wind Breathing with One-Step, Two-Step, and Three-Step Moving Exercises include: landing the heel lightly when stepping out, maintaining stability when shifting the center of gravity, and lightly grabbing the ground with the toes when the sole is fully on the ground. "Fully relaxed" means that, when touching the ground with the toes, the leg should be fully relaxed. "Firmly touching" means the toes should touch the ground firmly, and upon contact, pause for a moment before moving forward.

Do not touch lightly or loosely, like a dragonfly skimming the water. Patients with liver or spleen problems should touch the ground with the big toe when practicing the One-Step or Two-Step Moving Exercises, so as to increase the stimulation of the Dadun (LV-1) or Yinbai (SP-1) points. When practicing the Three-Step Moving Exercise, shift and stabilize the center of gravity first with the upper body slightly forward before touching the ground with the toes. The Baihui point (GV-20) should still point straight up. Toes touch the floor after the turning of the head and waist and the emptying of the back leg. In One-Step, Two-Step, and Three-Step Moving Exercises, breathe in while facing the front and breathe out when facing the side.

II. Application

Natural Movement with the Moderate Wind Breathing Exercise harmonizes Yin and Yang through breathing Daoyin. It stimulates the circulation of the internal Qi and frees the channels and network vessels to prevent diseases. This widely used clinical method relieves inflammation and heat, and prevents cancer and other diseases. Except for severe heart diseases, this can prevent and treat many chronic diseases, such as hepatitis, pneumonia, nephritis, enteritis, bronchitis, arthritis, neurosis, fever, the common cold, irregular menstruation, tuberculosis, glaucoma, and other eye diseases.

The One-Step, Two-Step, and Three-Step Walking Exercises are the principal Qigong practices for preventing and treating cancer. In addition, it is very effective in preventing the common cold and relieving fever and inflammation. Hence, this exercise is very suitable for practice during the winter and is also known as the "winter season exercise." Patients with hepatitis, pneumonia, emphysema, nephritis, and bronchitis may also adopt this as their main practice method. Patients with severe heart problems should not practice this. For those with mild heart disorders, breathe in and out gently and lightly, or breathe naturally when practicing, and the movements should also be gentle.

Light, loose, and soft clothes are best for this exercise. Clothing should be added or lightened according to the weather to avoid catching a cold. When practicing, loosen the belt, collar, and watch. Wear relatively flat shoes: avoid hard soles and high heels. Also, avoid hot and spicy foods. In the morning, do not eat, or eat very little, before practicing. Resume normal eating half an hour after practice. Do not eat too much before practicing in the afternoon or at night, either. Practice should start at least one hour after a meal, and rest at least 30 minutes after practice before dealing with other affairs. Ensure adequate time for practice. Cancer patients should commit to practicing no less than two hours per day.

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PART III

Clinical Applications

Qigong is widely used as a life-nurturing, health-promotion practice for people to remain healthy. In addition, Qigong has long revered medical and clinical applications. Similar to other TCM therapeutic methods, such as acupuncture and Tuina, Qigong is a non-drug therapy. Unlike the other TCM therapies, Qigong therapy does not involve medical devices, ingestion of medicinal substances, or body contact during the treatment. Mostly the treatment result of Qigong therapy is achieved by teaching patients self-cultivation methods and through the self-practice of the patients, which is a distinctive treatment method of Medical Qigong therapy.

This part will introduce the clinical applications of therapeutic Qigong, and therapeutic Qigong treatments for some common, frequently occurring, and complicated diseases.

CHAPTER 7

General Introduction to Qigong Therapy

This chapter focuses on the characteristics, treatment principles, treatment methods, and scope of application of Qigong therapy, and its practice conventions. It attempts to offer readers a general overview of Qigong therapy that will assist in the understanding of the following chapter, wherein specific clinical applications are explored and compared.

1. Characteristics and Indications of Qigong Therapy

To a certain degree, the characteristics of Qigong therapy are related to the clinical indications of Qigong therapy. On the one hand, the characteristics of Qigong suggest its clinical application. On the other hand, the clinical indications of Qigong reflect and stress Qigong's essential characteristics.

I. Characteristics of Qigong Therapy

Although Qigong therapy shares similar fundamental characteristics with TCM, it has its own distinctive characteristics, which are revealed mostly in the following two aspects: holism and self-initiation.

A. Holism

Qigong therapy focuses on improving the overall functions of the whole mind-body complex and on raising the general level of health and well-

being. Holism, one of the characteristics of Chinese medicine, is emphasized to a greater extent in Qigong therapy. While various Qigong forms may have specific treatment effects on specific diseases and the specific location of the disorder, the functional mechanisms of Qigong treatment are based on holistic philosophy. The whole of the individual, spirit-mind-body, functions naturally in an interactive context of mutual support and enhancement. Qigong therapy, then, is a holistic treatment that is macro-adjusting-and-controlled, meaning that because of the natural holism of the human system the Qigong process tends to have an influence on the whole.

As discussed previously, Qigong practice aims at achieving the goal of integrating the "three adjustments" into an integrative or unified practice through adjusting the body, the breath, and the mind. The holistic property of Qigong is most marvelously represented by the practice of unifying these three adjustments—purposefully integrating them to bring about a unity in function and being. In Chinese medicine this coherent or unified state is analogous to health in the well and to healing in those who seek to recover well-being.

Adjusting the mind plays the most important role among the three. TCM believes that the heart (Xin = Heart/Mind) governs the spirit (Shen) and is the master of the five-Zang and six-Fu organs. Adjusting the mind can calm emotional fluctuations and bring balance to the autonomic nervous system. Traditionally, it is said, when the "master" (Xin, Heart/Mind) is judicious, the "subordinates" (organs and functions) will be obedient accordingly and function coherently. The result of mind adjustment cultivates the conscious capacity to regulate the emotions and the nervous system, which then spontaneously regulates the five-Zang and six-Fu organs, as well as the whole body. Experimental studies have shown that, while entering tranquility, electrical activity of the neurons of the parietal lobe and frontal lobe of the brain tend to become more synchronized. This indicates that Qigong practice can adjust the central nervous system, and enhance its regulatory influence on the whole body.

The holistic property of breath adjustment is quite evident as well. Attention to breath and specific breathing exercises can accelerate the flow of internal Qi, which stimulates and nourishes both the prenatal and postnatal Qi. If the Qi and blood run smoothly inside the body, the whole body will have ample vitality. Experimental studies have shown that adjusting the frequency and patterns of breathing can increase the duration and intensity of diaphragm motion, increase the tidal volume, decrease the ventilatory volume, and alter the gas exchange rate. Research has also shown that prolonged exhalation can stimulate the parasympathetic nerves, manifesting in slower heart rate, lowered blood pressure, increased salivary secretion, and faster gastrointestinal peristalsis. Therefore, Qigong practice that purposefully alters the breathing

patterns not only strengthens the respiratory system, but improves the nervous system, cardiovascular system, and digestive system as well.[i]

Maneuvering the body, especially when practicing dynamic Qigong, helps increase the stability, flexibility, and mobility of the joints. Body movement also improves the nervous system, enhances the respiratory function, improves the fluid circulation of the heart, blood vessels, and lymphatic system, and promotes gastrointestinal peristalsis, digestion, and the absorption of nutrients. Body adjustment exercises the limbs and the bones on the exterior and stimulates the five-Zang and six-Fu organs in the interior. It coordinates the interior with the exterior, harmonizes the upper and lower parts of the body, and reinforces the proper functions of the whole body.

Furthermore, according to tradition, when integrating the three adjustments into one, the mind, breath, and body can be in such high coordination that pulling one hair moves the whole body.

Generally speaking, Qigong therapy does not focus on relieving local symptoms as in "treating the head when the head aches or treating the foot when the foot hurts." Instead it regulates the whole body and reinforces the functions of the whole body in order to relieve local symptoms.

The holistic effect of Qigong therapy is also reflected in its effect of multi-directional regulation: that is, one Qigong form can relieve two or more different conditions. For example, the same Qigong form can lower hypertension and raise hypotension. It can relieve syndromes of either hypothyroidism or hyperthyroidism. It can simultaneously help to regulate sleep and the function of bowel regularity. This multi-directional regulation is attributed to the holistic characteristic of regular Qigong practice and Qigong therapy, both of which aim at the normalization of the whole spirit-mind-body—the unity of function and being. For disease prevention and disease treatment, no matter which Qigong form is adopted, after a period of practice participants can expect to have better appetite, improved sleep, the feeling of happiness, and more available energy, all of which are the essential manifestations of holistic philosophy and therapy.

B. Self-Initiation

Qigong therapy is a self-motivated treatment. It focuses on self-initiated physical and mental practices to enhance self-healing potential to bring about comprehensive and integrated physiological and psychological functionality.

Through thousands of years of medical history, the doctor has typically played the dominant role in the selection of a treatment and the performance of a therapy. This is true not only in Chinese medicine but also in Western

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i It should also be noted that the breath is a key mechanism in the propulsion of the lymph, which is the foundation of both immune cell delivery and the elimination of metabolic by-products.

medicine. And patients, who are typically passive, accept the treatment as directed by the physician. However, in Qigong therapy, patients actively participate in and personally self-initiate the treatment. Once the Qigong forms are mastered by patients, they are able to control the degree of self-activation, the process of self-recovery, and the progress of the self-treatment program. This shifts the role of the patient from passively receiving treatment to actively initiating the healing function, and changes the patient's attitudes and actions towards their own healing. This self-initiated focus of the mind/intent exerts a profound influence on the physiological function of the body and significantly affects the efficacy of the treatment. These changes are closely related to the main reasons that Qigong therapy brings significant outcomes clinically when other treatment methods fail to cure, or have less effect on, certain complicated diseases.

Due to the self-initiation aspect of Qigong therapy, participants who are willing, engaged, and positive are enthusiastic about learning the Qigong forms diligently and practice as consistently as they can in order to maximize the therapeutic effect. Before starting Qigong therapy, one must understand the meaning of the change, which is changing from a passive treatment recipient to an active participant in the healing process. In addition, a learner must know that to practice Qigong requires determination and patience. It is also a benefit to have confidence that Qigong is a viable healing method. When an individual is half-believing and half-doubting, it is difficult to achieve the determination, consistency, and patience to practice successfully. From this perspective, Qigong experts emphasize that "believing creates efficacy." In order to build up patients' confidence, it is very helpful to assist patients in understanding the powerful healing mechanisms of Qigong. One of the key factors in successful Qigong therapy is supporting patients with scientific information so they reach the understanding that Qigong is based, not only in tradition, but also in practical science.

II. Indications and Contraindications of Qigong Therapy

Qigong therapy emphasizes bringing self-healing potential into the treatment process; it has broad clinical applications. To explain the indications of Qigong therapy clearly and specifically, the three aspects of Qigong, TCM, and biomedicine are used as follows, and they can be a reference to each other. The contraindications of Qigong therapy is explained from a psychiatric point of view.

A. Clinical Indications of Qigong Therapy

1. Qigong Point of View

Based on the mechanisms of Qigong practice and the characteristics of its treatment methods, the indications for Qigong therapy are as follows.

1. Chronic diseases: Qigong is primarily a self-cultivation practice. It takes time to obtain observable effects, and therefore it is especially suitable for chronic diseases.
2. Functional disorders: Qigong therapy is effective in treating functional disorder because it regulates the body functions through the regulatory nature of the three adjustments. Qigong therapy can be used for internal organ disorders, but normally as a supplementary treatment method.
3. Physical and psychological disorders: Qigong therapy practices foster improved function of both mind and body, and focus on actively regulating both physiological and psychological functions. Therefore, physical and psychological disorders can be treated by Qigong therapy. Several clinical studies have shown that among the diseases that can be effectively treated by Qigong, 70 percent are psychosomatic disorders. In addition, most age-related diseases are psychosomatic disorders, and when treated with Qigong therapy it has been reported that there are significant results. Qigong exercise is able to strengthen the synchronization of whole body systems, especially for older people, and it in turn enhances healthy longevity, and prevents and delays the aging process, even relieving or eliminating the symptoms of age-related diseases.
4. Diseases with unknown cause or those that are difficult to treat: Although these difficult cases are challenging for both Chinese and Western medicine, Qigong therapy, with the characteristics of self-initiation and holism, tends to activate the self-regulatory potential of such patients. Over time unexpectedly positive clinical results have been observed in numerous patients with unusual syndromes. Activation of self-healing capability is often neglected in other therapies, but it is the core mechanism of Qigong therapy.

2. TCM Point of View

According to the disease classifications of TCM, Qigong therapy is most suitable to treat deficiency syndromes and deficiency syndromes complicated with excessiveness, such as organ (Zang-Fu) deficiency, deficiency of Qi and blood, Yin-Yang disharmony, etc. Qigong can also be adopted as a supplementary

therapy in treating the exterior syndromes, excess syndromes, trauma, etc. Again, selecting Qigong forms is based on its treatment principles, which aim to enhance self-regulation—to dispel pathogenic factors by tonifying vital Qi and original spirit. Qigong performs better in supplementing deficiency than directly removing stagnation and expelling excess.

3. Biomedicine Point of View

In the last 50 years, the numbers of diseases that are understood to benefit from treatment by Qigong therapy has grown greatly based on biomedicine disease classification. In the 1950s the official number of disorders amenable to Qigong was 20. This was adjusted to over 60 in the 1960s. The diseases listed at that time were mainly in the digestive, respiratory, cardiovascular, and endocrine systems. Since the mid-1970s, especially after the Open-Door policy, Qigong has become more widely practiced and studied. Qigong scholars have significantly widened the recommended disease coverage for Qigong therapy. According to recent reports and statistics, the number of diseases that can be treated by Qigong therapy has reached 120.

The main diseases that benefit from Qigong as classified by physiological system are listed here for reference:

- Respiratory system: Common cold, chronic bronchitis, pulmonary emphysema, pulmonary heart disease, bronchial asthma, bronchiectasis, pulmonary tuberculosis, silicosis, pleurisy.
- Cardiovascular system: Arrhythmia, rheumatic carditis, essential hypertension, hypotension, ischemic heart disease, chronic myocarditis.
- Digestive system: Chronic gastritis, peptic ulcer, gastroptosia, dyspepsia, chronic enteritis, intestinal adhesion, chronic hepatitis, cirrhosis, anorexia nervosa, constipation.
- Urogenital system: Chronic nephritis, nephritic syndrome, sexual impotence, spermatorrhea, prospermia.
- Blood and hematopoietic system: Various purpuras and anemias.
- Endocrine system and metabolism: Hyperthyroidism, hypothyroidism, simple goiter, diabetes, hypoglycemia, hyperlipemia, obesity, gout.
- Nervous system: Sequel from cerebrovascular diseases, migraine, neurosis, neurodermatosis.
- Motor system: Arthritis (rheumatic arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and the others), cervical spondylopathy, scapulohumeral periarthritis, prolapse of lumbar intervertebral disc, hyperosteogeny, osteoporosis,

lumbar muscle strain, soft tissue injury, myophagism, progressive myodystrophy.

- Gynecopathy: Irregular menstruation, amenia, dysfunctional uterine blooding, dysmenorrhea, menopausal syndrome, hyperplasia in lobule of mammary gland, chronic pelvic inflammatory disease, hysteromyoma, hysteroptosis, acyesis, gestosis, abortion, abnormal fetal position.
- Diseases of eye, ear, nose, throat, etc.: Myopia, glaucoma, tinnitus, hypoacusis, chronic rhinitis, chronic tonsillitis, chronic periodontitis, stomatocace.
- Difficult diseases: Tumor, leukemia, lupus erythematosus, abstinence syndrome, etc.

Although Qigong therapy has been used widely, it is not appropriate as a primary therapy for all the disorders. There remain categories of disease where Qigong is better as a secondary strategy in complement with other therapies—such as acute infectious diseases, acute poisoning, radical physical trauma, bleeding, shock, and severe organ diseases.

B. The Contraindications

The contraindications of Qigong therapy are mostly psychiatric disorders, particularly severe schizophrenia, mania, and depression, some serious mental illnesses, and some relatively minor mental illnesses, such as neurosis and anxiety, hypochondria, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Under the guidance of experienced Qigong therapists, they can be treated with positive results.

People who have a family history or personal medical history of psychotic disorders may be at a higher risk for possible complications when Qigong therapy is implemented, since improper or over-exuberant practice may induce further occurrence of psychotic episodes. In addition, people who do not suffer psychosis but present with personality disturbance, eccentric conduct, and irrational thinking are not suitable for Qigong therapy, because they are at high risk of trigger-undesired Qi deviation (physical or more often emotional disorientation) during Qigong practice.

In conclusion, Qigong therapy can normally be a main treatment method for diseases belonging to the indication category of Qigong, and it can be as a supplementary treatment method for the disorders not listed as an indication and which do not belong to the contraindication category.

2. Principles of Administering Treatment by Syndrome Differentiation in Qigong Therapy

Both worldview and methodology in Chinese medicine are based on holism and treatment identification by syndrome recognition based on classic TCM theories. These two principles of holism and administering treatment by differentiation are found throughout every aspect of TCM theory and clinical application. Qigong, as one of the important treatment methods in Chinese medicine, follows these two treatment principles, but also develops its own distinct treatment methods.

The treatment principle of clinical Qigong therapy includes two additional categories: (a) identifying TCM syndromes and administering Qigong accordingly; and (b) varying and tailoring Qigong practices to each individual's need—including adjusting the time and duration of practice based on the individual situation, and adjusting the location of the practice to suit the individual situation.

The first category embodies the treatment based on the pattern of TCM syndromes. The second category is based on holism and naturalness as discussed earlier, including the human body itself as a whole and considering the interaction of the human system with the larger natural system of the environment as a whole.

I. Recognizing TCM Syndromes and Administering Qigong by Syndrome Differentiation

Both administering Qigong according to the syndromes of TCM theory and administering Qigong according to disease classification reflect the Chinese medicine principle "Determine the treatment by differentiating the diagnosis." Recognizing the specific characteristics of the syndromes is the foundation of all Chinese medicine and is therefore the foundation of clinical and therapeutic Qigong. It matches the prescription of Qigong practice methods directly with the characteristic features of the syndromes of TCM theory. Somewhat similarly, but based more on conventional medicine, identifying the disease and administering Qigong based on disease classifications means selecting Qigong treatment forms by disease rather than by TCM syndrome.

A. The TCM Syndrome Basis for Treatment with Qigong Therapy

On the basis of the comprehensive analysis of the clinical data gathered from the four classical diagnosis methods of TCM, Qigong therapists analyze the type and location of the symptom complex and its characteristics. Recognizing the TCM syndromes is the basis for selecting the most suitable Qigong practices to resolve the disorder or complement medical treatment. In the language of TCM, this process is known as "differentiating and recognizing TCM syndromes and administering Qigong accordingly."

1. The Features of Qigong Therapy Based on Syndrome Differentiation

Compared with the methods of TCM syndrome recognition used in acupuncture and other types of treatment in Chinese medicine, the method used in Qigong practice is somewhat modified.

As explained in Section 1, the characteristics of Qigong therapy are holistic and self-motivating. Because of its holistic feature, the clinical requirements for syndrome differentiation are relatively simple in terms of the depth and broadness. For example, its basic clinical diagnostic methods are the theory of the eight guiding principles, the theory of Zang-Fu and meridians, and the theory of the Three Treasures—essence, Qi, and spirit. Others, such as the theory of Qi and blood, body fluids, the Six-Channel theory, and the Four-Aspect theory, are used less frequently. For example in Zang-Fu syndrome differentiation, Qigong only needs to identify four of the eight guiding principles—deficiency/excess, and cold/heat. The more complex details such as deficiency of Qi or blood, or the degree of the deficiency, are often less necessary. It is typically sufficient in therapeutic Qigong to distinguish just the two types—deficiency and excess.

In determining treatment by TCM syndrome differentiation, the selection of the treatment method in TCM is based on understanding the clinical manifestation and then administering the most suitable treatment. In clinical Qigong therapy, the use of relatively simple TCM syndrome recognition can result in a relatively simple treatment plan.

In herbal medicine, for instance when a syndrome is identified, such as liver-spleen disharmony with depressed liver function and blood deficiency, a herbal formula can be determined according to the differentiation of the syndrome. A physician would follow the classic rules for the four therapeutic components—theory, form, prescription, and medicine—and focus the treatment on activating the liver by resolving the depressed function, fortifying the spleen, and harmonizing the function. The physician would compose a herbal formula or adopt an existing remedy such as "Free and Easy Wanderer" as the basic mode, with some modifications based on the specific symptoms of the patient.

However, for Qigong therapy, one only requires identifying the syndrome at the level of liver excess and spleen deficiency, and the physician then decides the Qigong form that can be used to drain the liver excess and to supplement the spleen deficiency. In this case, one might apply the Six Syllable Formula to drain the liver's excess and Internal Nourishing Qigong to supplement the spleen deficiency.

Although Qigong therapy is relatively simple in TCM syndrome recognition and treatment selection, it develops unique guidance for clinical practice, such as identifying calmness or emotional status, personality, and personal physique. Since Qigong is composed of static (Jing Gong) and dynamic (Dong Gong) forms, it is necessary to consider which Qigong form best meets the patient's individual personality, needs, and limitations. Therefore, the distinct feature of Qigong syndrome differentiation is obvious here, though calmness, emotional status, and personality can be included in the theory of the eight guiding principles.

2. History of Administering Qigong Based on TCM Syndromes

The method of administering Qigong according to the TCM syndromes originated from the natural capacity of the human system for self-repair to maintain its well-being. For instance, we can image that ancient people in hot weather would cool themselves by laying down with their limbs stretched out, breathing easily and relaxed. Gradually the "open-limb Qigong" method was created. The natural exhalation allows for the expression of vocal sounds; it was realized over time that sounds had effects on different parts of the body and different organ systems. For enhancing the liver, it was determined that the HA sound formula was appropriate, which has the effect of cooling the body heat and descending the Qi. The "descending method" (降法) is also extended from there. In cold weather, people tend to gather their limbs together to retain natural body heat: "With the hands hold both shoulders and bend the legs." This is often called "Moving Qi into the Elixir Field." In this way, they developed what is known as the "closing method" (合法).

If they got injured and felt pain, they unconsciously blew air to the injured and hurting area to relieve the pain and stop the bleeding. This naturally led, over time, to the Qigong method "direct internal Qi to treat illnesses of the exterior." In weightlifting one tends to naturally inhale deeply and then breathe out quickly, making the HEI sound to direct and maximize force. Eventually this was called the HEI formula (嘿字诀), and gradually became a method to manipulate internal Qi to optimize strength for healing or daily work. Gradually, the methods of "mobilize the Qi" and "ascending the Qi" were developed as well.

In contrast to the development of the healing formulas from the exterior to interior, Qigong forms also developed in the opposite way. In practice, the internal pathological process itself may spontaneously cause unconscious Qigong phenomena, triggering the natural operating of the three adjustments. This can lead to the spontaneous movement of the body, with the limbs vibrating and activation of the meridians and collaterals. Also, the internal vision of the energy channels may occur. This was referred to by Li Shizhen (1518–1593): "The body meridians can only be observed inwardly by practitioners themselves when they practice Qigong."

After centuries of continuous observation and evaluation of these natural and instinctive internal and external actions, the three adjustments became the basis of the Qigong system, and Qigong methods were developed such as "Six Syllable Formula to Regulate Five-Zang," "Method to Harmonize Five-Zang," "Daoyin to Dredge the Meridians and the Collaterals," "Tu-Na Internal Elixir Art," "Circulation Qigong to Regulate Essence, Qi, and Spirit," and many, many others.

General Treatise on Etiology and Symptomology of Various Diseases (诸病源候论)[1] by Chao Yuanfang, the royal doctor in the Sui dynasty (605 CE), was a monograph on the etiological factors of disease and pathogenesis. This book originally established the method of recognizing TCM syndromes and administering Qigong accordingly. It has an essential position in the literature of Qigong therapy. It discussed the etiological factors and pathogenesis of numerous diseases in detail. According to scholars, it recorded 289 forms of Daoyin or health preservation—which unfortunately have been lost. Among the 289 forms, not counting 76 repetitions, there were 213 individual Daoyin forms for 110 symptoms and signs of disease. Many Qigong forms for varied diseases and serious syndrome manifestations had not been seen before. The form was adjusted according to the conditions. For most manifestations, tens of Daoyin movements were suggested for one symptom or sign.

3. Common Methods Used in Identifying TCM Syndromes for Signs and Symptoms

Recognizing TCM Syndromes of Eight Guiding Principles

The eight guiding principles for syndrome differentiation and treatment determination are composed of the original Yin and Yang plus three descriptive Yin/Yang pairs—Yin and Yang, interior and exterior, cold and hot, and deficient and excessive. The eight principles method of syndrome differentiation allows for all disease manifestations to be classified. Yin and Yang, which are at the highest level in comparison with the other six principles in the eight principle hierarchy, describe the general characteristics of disease. Syndrome

differentiation is further refined by determining the nature of the dysfunction in terms of location, temperature, and the state of Qi: Yin—interior, cold, and deficient; or Yang—exterior, hot, and excessive.

Ancient people were very knowledgeable about administering Qigong according to Yin-Yang syndrome recognition. *Miraculous Canon for Longevity from Fetal Energy* (长生胎元神用经)[2] says: "Breathing in lucid Qi through the nose acts as Yang; blowing out turbid Qi through the mouth as Yin." Retaining air by holding the breath can relieve the cold syndrome; while blowing out the turbid helps to clear the hot syndrome. According to this principle, people with Yang deficiency benefit from emphasizing the inhalation, that is, paying attention to and prolonging the inhalation. In contrast, people with Yin deficiency benefit from emphasizing the exhalation, that is, paying attention to and prolonging the exhalation.

There are many more Yin-Yang alternatives in the mind adjustment component of the three adjustments practice—mind concentration and mind-reach. Dynamic mind concentration is associated with Yang while static mind concentration is more Yin; keeping the mind on the lower body (including the belly or anus) descends Yang, while upper-body focus (including the head, the brain, and the head orifices) assists in raising Yang. *The Subtleties of Qigong* or *Qigong Zhi Miao Yao Jue* (气功至妙要诀) says: "In a Yang situation, keep the mind on Yin-cold lesion with Yang Qi; in a Yin situation, keep the mind on Yang-hot lesion with Yin Qi. In winter, imagine the room and house warm with Yang Qi. In summer, imagine the room cool with Yin Qi. One feels cold as ice and snow while he acquires Yin Qi and feels hot as fire while acquiring Yang Qi." *Finest Cream for Life-Nurturing* or *Yangsheng Tihu* (养生醍醐)[3] says: "One imagines fire then feels warm; one imagines water and feels cold."

Determining treatment by cold, heat, deficiency, and excess, this classic "rule" for treatment was: "cold syndrome, heat it; hot syndrome, cool it; deficient syndrome, supplement it; excessive syndrome, drain it." In *Remarks on Life-Nurturing* or *Yangsheng Fuyu* (养生肤语),[4] the author pointed to Qigong for syndrome resolution: "the deficiency syndrome can be treated with tightening and consolidation of Qi by focusing inward to supplement; the excessive syndrome requires massage and Daoyin by pinching, dispersing and breathing to release; the heat syndrome can be treated by exhaling the turbid Qi through the mouth and inhaling the lucid through the nose to cool it down; the cold syndrome can be treated by holding the breath to light the fire in the mind and the lower elixir field to warm it." These four methods serve as the foundation Qigong methods for treating the primary Yin-Yang syndromes. They are considered by many medical experts to be comparable to or even superior to herbal remedies.

Generally speaking, in the clinical application of Qigong, ascending and opening Qi with upward and outward motion may elevate Yang, whereas descending and closing Qi with downward and inward motion may subdue Yang. For Yin deficiency with Yang hyperactivity, descending Qi and purging heat are suitable in order to enrich Yin and to subdue Yang.

In the three adjustments aspect of Qigong, body posture and movement, breath focus, and mind intent all influence the function of the Qi to resolve the presenting syndrome. To enrich Yin and subdue Yang, assume the head-up, feet-down, and hands-pressing-down standing position or simply sit upright; emphasize exhaling when breathing, while stirring the tongue and swallowing the saliva; mind-reach can then shift to focusing on the external body or the lower part of the body with images of Yin—contemplating cold and cool things—such as ice and snow in the body.

To enrich Yang and resolve Yin excess, to boost Yang and check Yin, the Qigong form needs to be a closing and descending Qi style; in contrast to the suggestions above, the patient lays down with head lower than the feet, or sits cross-legged with hands closed firmly; emphasis is on the inhalation when breathing; mind-reach focuses on the internal body, imagining Yang—contemplating warm and hot things—such as warm breezes and a sunny environment.

Distinguishing between dynamic and static Qigong is also associated with the eight guiding principles of TCM syndrome recognition. There is a clear division between Yin and Yang regarding inherent property—dynamic is Yang whereas the static is Yin. Internal Qigong stresses tranquility. The dynamic property within static internal Qigong is embodied in stillness and quiescence. External Qigong stresses movement. The tranquil property within dynamic external Qigong is embodied in the motion. The appropriate selection of dynamic and static Qigong will influence the balance between Yin and Yang in the body.

In *Yu's Teaching Instructions* or *Yu Shi Zhong Shuo* (于氏中说),[5] it is stated that "Yin comes from tranquility; Yang comes from motion." In clinical Qigong therapy, Yin excess with Yang deficiency is primarily treated with dynamic Qigong. Yang excess with Yin deficiency is primarily treated with static Qigong. However, if we apply the eight principles and the theory of Yin and Yang comprehensively, Yin and Yang—dynamic and static—transform from each other. In accord with the principle of transformation, Zhang Zhicong (张志聪) in *The Variorum on Plain Questions of Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (黄帝内经素问集注)[6] quoted the notation by Shaozi (邵子): "When motion is applied, Yang is produced; when motion reaches its extreme, Yin is produced. Similarly, when tranquility is applied, calm is produced; when tranquility reaches its extreme,

then Yang is produced. In the eight guiding principles theory of Yin and Yang, reaching the extreme transforms the natural properties into their opposites."

An important statement which first appeared in *Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (黄帝内经)[7] reads: "Extreme Yang generates Yin and extreme Yin generates Yang." Shaozi broadened the concepts of Yin and Yang to dynamic and static aspects of Qigong practice, which could be used as a reference for determining Qigong therapy by utilizing TCM syndrome recognition.

In providing balanced and effective Qigong instruction and influencing the Qi for health improvement, it is necessary to find the proper combination of the dynamic and the static components of Qigong. The intent in TCM is to harmonize Yin and Yang according to the properties of both the patient's physique and the nature of the disease. It has been found that "Spontaneous Motion" often appears when practicing static Qigong. This was thought by many to be a deviation of Qigong. Yet, many experts have promoted spontaneous Qigong and thought the more, the better. Both views are incomplete. The foundation of Qigong therapeutics is to determine the proper balance of movement and stillness to best support those who seek greater health to succeed in their Qigong practice.

Syndrome Recognitions of Organs and Vessels

In TCM syndrome recognition, utilizing the eight guiding principles is a qualitative classification, whereas syndrome recognition determined by organs and meridians is a classification by the location and characteristics of the illness. Chinese medicine believes that the human body is composed of five functional systems centralized by the five-Zang. In the physiological condition, functions of the five-Zang run harmoniously and play a key role in maintaining a healthy physiological function. In the pathological situation, the five-Zang are in an unbalanced state. Regulating unbalanced Zangs or systems becomes one of the important parts of Qigong treatment. Meridians connect interior organs and exterior limbs, and serve as the principal circulation channel of the Qi and the blood. Once they are injured, the stagnation of Qi and blood can affect the functions of organs and result in a related series of symptoms and signs.

The application of TCM organ syndrome recognition usually involves the liver, heart, spleen, lung, kidney, and three Jiao. Depending on the classification of the Five Elements, Six Syllable Formula, Five-Element Boxing, primary body training, advanced body training, etc., treatment of the relevant organ syndromes is through adjusting the syllable articulation, location, time, color, etc. The treatment adjustment follows the same properties of the Five Elements; or performs supplementing or draining according to "mutual promotion and mutual control relationship among the Five Elements."

For example, *Illustrations of Five Zang Organs and Six Fu Organs in Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* or *Huangdi Neijing Wuzang Liufu Tu* (黄帝内经五脏

六腑图)[7] and *Chart of Nursing Life According to Seasons* or *Sishi Tiaoyang Tu* (四时调养图) from *Eight Essays for Cherishing Life* (遵生八笺)[8] mentioned using mind-reach to regulate the five-Zang organs: "Usually in January, February and March…sit facing the east, breathe in green Qi in Zhen Gong (震宫) into mouth nine times, then swallow it down" to nourish liver. "In April and May… sit facing the south…breathe in the red Qi in Li Gong (离宫) into mouth three times, then swallow it down" to strengthen the heart. "In July, August and September…sit facing the west…breathe in the white Qi in Dui Gong (兑宫) seven times, then swallow it down" to nourish lung. "In October, November and December…sit facing the north…breathe in black Qi in Xuan Gong (玄宫) into the mouth five times, then swallow it down" to benefit kidney. "Usually in summer months…and the last 18 days of the rest of the three seasons… properly sit on Zhong Gong (中宫)…imagine and breathe in the yellow Qi in Kun Gong (坤宫) into mouth twelve times, then swallow it down" to benefit the spleen.

This method comprehensively employs time, location, and color in the Five Elements to nourish the organs corresponding to them. The first, second, and third month of a lunar year, the spring time governing growth, corresponds to the liver inside and connects with the Eastern Qi outside, its color is green, and these properties of the Five Elements all belong to Wood. Cultivating these elements nourishes the liver. The fourth, fifth, and sixth months of a lunar year, the summer time, corresponds to the heart inside, connects with the Southern Qi outside, its color is red, and these properties of the Five Elements belong to Fire. Cultivating these elements regulates and strengthens the heart. The seventh, eighth, and ninth months of a lunar year, the autumn time, connects to the lung inside and the Western Qi outside, its color is white, and its properties of the Five Elements belong to Gold (Metal). Cultivating these elements nurtures the lung. The last three months of a lunar year, the winter time, connects to the kidney inside and to the Northern Qi outside, its color is black, and its properties of the Five Elements belong to Water. Cultivating these elements can grow and nourish the kidney. The spleen locates in the Middle Palace (Zhong Gong, 中宫) and is unable to own a season alone (damp controls the summer; the Earth governs transportation), but distributes in the other seasons, for the last 18 days in each of the four seasons; its color is yellow and the Five Elements are under Earth. Cultivating these elements can strengthen the spleen.

For regulating meridians and collaterals, Directing Qi along the Meridian (Xun Jing Dao Qi Fa, 循经导气法) is employed. It dredges the 12 meridians and the eight extra vessels, and activates and reorganizes Qi circulation through the meridian points with the mind or by means of patting or massaging directly on the affected acupoints. Ancient people accumulated much experience, and they summarized the method known as "Correct Posture to Smooth Qi." In this

practice the body is sustained in a balanced position—the meridians smoothen, and Qi and blood circulate properly. Massaging and patting along the meridians and Daoyin are performed on the acupoints and along the direction and route of the meridians. Tri-Line Relaxation is another example of this.

Many other forms of Qigong aim to open the meridians and to enhance circulation of the Qi and the blood. Qigong forms such as Small Circulation Qigong, Genuine Qi Moving Qigong, and Internal Elixir Qigong all aim at reinforcing the governance and regulatory functions that the conception and governor vessels have upon the 12 regular meridians. For example, Genuine Qi Moving Qigong essentially aims to activate Qi at the Small Circulation (conception and governor vessels) in 100 days. Grand Circulation Qigong is applicable only after the success of the Small Circulation and aims at further promoting Qi circulation along the eight extra vessels and 12 regular meridians. Grand Circulation Qigong reinforces the general circulation of Qi: three-Yin-meridian Qi of hand from chest to hand; three-Yang-meridian Qi of hand from hand to head; three-Yang-meridian Qi of foot from head to foot; and three-Yin-meridian Qi of foot from foot to chest. Moreover, it takes the thoroughfare vessel (TV, 冲脉) seriously into account in the practice.

Syndrome Identification on Essence, Qi, and Spirit

Chinese medicine believes that the essence, Qi, and spirit (Jing, Qi, Shen) are the Three Treasures of the human body, and each of them plays an important role in keeping and upholding physiological and psychological functions and living activities. The lack and deficiency of any of the three causes disease. Historically, Qigong and the clinical applications of Qigong therapy have explored more deeply the influence of essence, Qi, and spirit on human health than the other therapies of TCM. Qigong experts in past eras placed different emphases on the importance of the Three Treasures and felt differently about which of the three treasures was primary. Those who favored essence as the primary treasure felt that essence belonged to the element of Water. According to the *Classic of Dragon and Tiger* or *Long Hu Jing* (龙虎经),[9] "Water has the power to nurture the creation of the ten thousand things." The famous physician Zhang Jiebin (张介宾, 1563–1640) said: "Essence is born by the holiest God, and is the father of the living." Masters and teachers who favored spirit thought that, although the spirit may be produced from essence, it was the real master of both essence and Qi. The book *Classic of Holy Benevolence* or *Shengji Jing* (圣济经)[10] stated: "Spirit is the controller of life."

Those masters and teachers who felt that Qi was the primary of the Three Treasures said: "In life, Qi is the foundation; all things on the earth are based on it." The physician Li Dongyuan (李东垣, 1180–1251) said: "Qi, the root of the essence and the spirit." In fact, the Three Treasures are interdependent, as

stated in *Huai Nan Zi* (淮南子)[11] "essence, the residence of living; Qi, the carrier of living; spirit, the controller of living. When any one fails its function, all the Three Treasures are injured." Zhang Boduan (张伯端, 987–1082), the famous Daoist Qigong expert in the Song dynasty, said in his *Secret Documents for Qing Hua* (青华秘文):[12] "Original spirit exists, then the original Qi forms; when the original Qi forms then original essence is born."

"Cultivating essence to produce Qi; cultivating Qi to become spirit; and cultivating spirit to arrive at mind intent" are the principles of Qigong clinical treatment when applying TCM syndrome recognition through essence, Qi, and spirit. It is generally believed they are the three stages of Qigong practice. The first one primarily exercises the body; the second cultivates the Qi and mind; and the third masters the mind and spirit. So, at different stages, the methods of carrying out the three adjustments are somewhat different. In addition, although essence, Qi, and Spirit belong to different Zang-Fu organs, the practice methods of the three do not always match the methods for the corresponding Zang-Fu organs. Qigong form selection, based on essence cultivation, flexibly combines to address TCM syndrome recognition based on Zang-Fu organs as well as meridians. The forms for cultivating Qi and spirit incline to reorganize and regulate the natural holism.

Generally, in the essence stage, Qigong forms center on the Small Circulation, which plays the fundamental role of preparing for cultivation in the next two stages. Accomplishing Small Circulation improves the fundamental functions of the body, and prepares the individual for achieving success in the Qi and spirit phases of cultivation.

B. Identifying Diseases and Administering Qigong

Certain Qigong forms or portions of a form have specific effects on specific illnesses. Based on clear diagnosis, Qigong forms can be adopted to resolve the health challenge. Therapeutic Qigong forms are recommended as a result of the careful summation of the combination of traditional Qigong principles and the insights and breakthroughs of modern medicine. Treating cancer with New Qigong Therapy is an example. Based on the therapeutic effects observed in cancer patients who practiced New Qigong Therapy, most cancer patients can effectively adopt New Qigong Therapy under their therapist's supervision. The specificity of "Identifying Diseases and Administering Qigong" is not as specific as drug therapy. A Qigong form that has an observable effect on one disease can also be effective in treating other diseases. New Qigong Therapy is typically used for treating cancer, but it is applicable in treating other mental and physical disorders as well.

In the clinic, Qigong therapies usually integrate global treatment. Identifying patterns and administering Qigong is very similar to identifying diseases and administering Qigong. One form is able to treat many kinds of diseases—Internal Nourishing Qigong is for peptic ulcer and chronic gastroenteritis, but it is also beneficial for asthma, etc. At the same time, one disease could be treated with many forms of Qigong. For example, in the case of hypertension, the usual forms include Relaxation Qigong, Stake Standing, Relaxing Quiescent Qigong, and the Six Syllable Formula. In clinical practice, Qigong therapists determine one primary Qigong form for the symptoms and signs and then adopt some appropriate parts from several other Qigong forms as supplementary forms according to the diagnostic needs or patient preferences and limitations.

II. Administering Qigong Suitably to Individual, Time, and Location

The principle of prescribing suitable Qigong therapeutics that are tailored for the individual, the time, and the location involves the clinical presentation of the holistic perspective of "human and the heaven integrate into oneness," and is in accord with syndrome recognition; the component parts of the process are all complementary to each other. This principle is more important for Qigong therapy than for other TCM therapies due to the fact that it emphasizes the holism of Qigong therapy. Therefore, as a principle for Qigong therapy, it has very personalized content and must be applied with great flexibility.

A. Administering Qigong for Different Individuals

A therapeutic Qigong program progresses in an orderly fashion and step by step. As the unique nature of each participant differs in aims, knowledge, and understanding of Qigong, it is important to carefully tailor the practice to each individual. Beyond TCM syndrome and disease differences, selecting the Qigong form also takes personal differences into consideration such as sex, personality, time availability, physique, etc. In *Twenty-Five Types of Personality* in *Spiritual Pivot* (灵枢 • 阴阳二十五人),[7] the individual personality and physique were classified into 25 types according to TCM theory. These and other key factors are used as references for reaching the determination of which therapeutic Qigong form is most appropriate in any specific case.

1. Gender Distinction

The male is more Yang and strong in Qi whereas the female presents more Yin and is more rich in blood. The female has unique functions related to

menstruation, leucorrhea, pregnancy, and labor, so women share many Qigong practice methods with men but some are very different. In *Internal Elixir Art for the Female* or *Nu Dan Jing* (女丹经) written by ancient Qigong masters, the Qigong forms for women were put forth based on women's unique characteristics in Yin, Yang, Qi, and blood. Generally speaking, the male adopts Qigong to enhance and protect Yang and Qi, whereas the female uses Qigong to regulate and support Yin and blood. It is advised that in menstruation, leucorrhea, pregnancy, and labor, the form needs to be adjusted. For instance, this can be accomplished by shifting from a dynamic form to one centering on the static, from standing to sitting, stressing natural respiration, and moving the focus of the mind-reach upward in the body from the lower Dantian (pelvic area) to the middle Dantian (chest area).

2. Age Differences

The physiological characteristics of the aged and young people require differing considerations in Qigong therapy. Typically, older people are deficient in essence and Qi. It is typical to find circulation of Qi and blood with a degree of blockage. In contrast younger people are rich in essence and Qi and therefore healthy in the circulation of Qi and blood. Older people respond relatively slower than young people do—to all therapies. Therefore, these factors need to be taken into consideration in selecting and recommending Qigong forms and implementing Qigong practice. Some experts suggest that for the purpose of preserving health, it is preferable to teach older people Daoyin to promote Qi flow and replenish the body, and to teach young people static Qigong in order to preserve the essence. In contrast others suggest gentle movements and focused breath practices that are easy and accessible for older patients, while more vigorous practices of Gong Fu or martial arts are better for preserving health in younger practitioners. For some treatment purposes—certain disorders, group practice, or research—it is necessary to use one Qigong form across several age groups. In this case, it is then best to adjust the time and intensity of the Qigong practice to suit the individual needs of the patients of differing ages.

3. Individual Character and Physique

Individual character has a broad meaning, usually the general mental attitude, or the general psychological characteristics, that reflects certain tendencies, including capability, temperament, personality, etc. Physique mainly refers to the characteristics of the physical body—strength, size, capacity. In accord with the emphasis on holism in Chinese medicine, both the individual character and the physique are important to consider comprehensively in determining the most appropriate Qigong practice forms for any particular case. In *Tong*

Tian in *Spiritual Pivot* (灵枢 • 通天篇)[7] it says: "Man could be defined as five types: sufficient Yang, deficient Yang, sufficient Yin, deficient Yin, and Yin and Yang balanced. These five types of people present different body conditions and different qualities of muscle, bone, Qi and blood." *Twenty-Five Types of Personality* in *Spiritual Pivot* (灵枢 • 阴阳二十五人)[7] says: "Based on Five Elements, Gold, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth, distinguish the five colors and classify the people into the five categories." These two views are typical in the TCM system's explanation for variations in both character and physique.

Tong Tian in *Spiritual Pivot* says that Taiyin (sufficient Yin)-type people, with sufficient Yin and deficient Yang, are introverted by nature. This is consistent with the dominant function of the parasympathetic nervous system. For people belonging to this type, it is preferable to focus on dynamic Qigong, following the order and progressing step by step, and adopting static Qigong when it is appropriate to do so. For people belonging to the Shaoyin (少阴) type, they are strong in Yin but are fairly weak in Yang. Their character is similar to the people of the Taiyin (sufficient Yin) type, but with strong adaptation capability. Qigong forms for the Shaoyin type should focus primarily on motion and be complemented with static Qigong. Yin-Yang balanced people are more neutral, balanced in sympathetic and parasympathetic function, and fit for all types of Qigong. People of the Taiyang type are sufficient in Yang and relatively weak in Yin. They are extroverted by nature with the dominant function of the sympathetic nervous system. Theoretically, static Qigong should be the main form. People of the Shaoyang type (少阳) are strong in Yang property and relatively weak in Yin, which is similar to the Taiyang type but to a lesser degree. These types of patients will naturally benefit from more static Qigong with the addition of movement when it is appropriate. It is also typical that those who are more Yang by nature (and would benefit from stillness) may find it hard to be still. Therefore, it is reasonable to practice stillness in movement. This means that it may be helpful to allow for practices that include movement but cultivate the capacity for stillness.

It is especially important to note that people with unhealthy mental status, personality disturbance, and bizarre behavior and thought, and who easily go to extremes, typically belong to the Taiyin or Taiyang types. Their practice should be under the careful guidance of Qigong professionals. Starting from dynamic Qigong, they should be encouraged to let the mind follow the post movement (意随桩形), of appropriate duration and intensity, and perform natural breathing. When cases of deviation or aggravation have occurred in Qigong, it has historically been associated with the Taiyin and Taiyang types.

The *Twenty-Five Types of Personality* in *Spiritual Pivot* also points to character and physique corresponding to the Five Elements. The Wood-trending patient presents "pale complexion, small head, long face, full shoulders and

back, upright body, small hands and feet…" The Fire attribution shows "red complexion, and diamond face, small head, well-built shoulders, back, thigh and abdomen, and small hands and feet…" The Earth-trending patients present "yellow, round face, full head, nice shoulders and back, full abdomen, beautiful legs, small hands and feet, fleshy, balanced upper and lower parts…" The Gold or Metal property expresses "white, square face, small head, small shoulders and back, thin abdomen, small hands and feet just like a bone growing out from the leg…" People who express the Water element reveal "black, uneven face, full head, grand cheeks, narrow shoulders, full abdomen…long buttocks, so the back presents a quite long form…"

When the color and conditions are in balance in a healthy person, they are simply characteristic of the individual's healthy constitution and naturally given qualities and talents. However, when one or several of the characteristics express in the extreme, this may be pointing to particular pathological qualities or factors that may be considered in determining the appropriate Qigong practices to regulate function. It is proposed by many Medical Qigong professionals that attending to the categories of the Five Elements and the TCM syndrome differentiation of Zang-Fu function is the ultimate key to health recovery and wellness.

4. Lifestyle

In Medical Qigong practice, we must take the patient's daily life and work into consideration. For people who have to stand when working, such as salespeople, traffic policemen, etc., select sets of dynamic Qigong or add some sitting forms of static Qigong as appropriate. Stake Standing Qigong may not be appropriate for this group of people. For white-collar workers sitting in front of the computer the whole day, it may not be especially appropriate to suggest sitting meditation as the major Qigong form, so dynamic Qigong is necessary. Alternatively, as young people love to move, it may be better to start from dynamic Qigong and transition to static Qigong as a way of introducing balance. Older people prefer tranquility, so it is suitable to start from gentle, tranquil practice and transition to more dynamic movement as is appropriate to the situation. In general, we should consider Yin and Yang balance as well as proper dynamic and static Qigong for each individual, and make the Qigong prescription correspondingly.

B. Administering Qigong by Time

Holism in Chinese medicine believes that humans and nature are closely bound together. As a small universe, humans receive great influence from the large universe. The alternation of Yin and Yang in a year shows in the warm in

spring, the heat in summer, the cool in fall, and the cold in winter. Among the four seasons, spring and summer are subordinate to Yang, whereas the fall and winter are subordinate to Yin. So, in Administering Qigong by TCM Syndrome Recognition, we attend to the nourishment of Yang in the spring and summer, to strengthen Yin in the fall and winter. In this way Yin and Yang both are protected and mutually supportive. In spring and summer static Qigong is suggested, accompanied by moving the tongue and swallowing the saliva, or contemplating ice and snow to enrich Yin, nourish Yang, and protect liver and heart Qi. Movement is preferable in fall and winter, combined with holding the breath to produce heat or contemplating fire and heat (存思火热法). This breeds Yang and nourishes Yin, in order to support lung Qi in not getting burned or too full, and to sustain the kidney Qi in not becoming influenced or damaged by cold or deficiency.

During the 12 two-hour periods in one day, use the six Yang (六阳) period centering on the midnight to do Qigong exercises to assist Yang; use the six Yin (六阴) period centering at midday to do Qigong which benefits Yin.

Based on the theory of the meridians and collaterals and the theory of the Zang-Fu organs, some ancient and modern Qigong masters combined the transition of the four seasons not only with the circulation of Qi and blood in the meridians and collaterals but with the Zang-Fu organs. They advocated altering Qigong according to the shifting of the seasons. It was proposed that even in one season, the change of each solar period affected the prescription of Qigong exercises. For example, Qigong practices in spring are the exercises of the Pericardium meridian of hand-Jueyin and the San-Jiao meridian of hand-Shaoyang; beginning of spring (Li Chun)—sending up Yang Qi, regulating Qi and blood; Yushui (rain water)—promoting the running of the meridians to avoid Wind Evil invading; Jing Zhe (waking of insects)—regulating San-Jiao to strengthen the pericardium; Chuen Fen (spring equinox)—regulating Yin, Yang, and ascending and descending of the liver and gallbladder to adapt to the seasons changing; Qing Ming (pure brightness)—smoothing the functional activities of Qi to avoid depression and stagnation of liver Yang; Gu Yu (grain rain)—dispelling liver-Wind and promoting blood circulation to brighten the eyes. The Qigong postures, respiratory methods, and mind-intent vary with each solar period. Thus, selecting the Qigong form based on the time change is meaningful due to the close relationship between them.

C. Administering Qigong By Location

The region and orientations of Qigong practice are important factors which need to be considered in recommending Qigong. From the view of modern

science, the difference caused by the changes of these two factors may relate to environment and the earth's magnetic field.

1. By Region

On Unusual Therapies from *Plain Questions* (素问 • 异法方宜论)[7] says: "The central region, plain and humid, is the place rich in variety of products. People (living in the central region) eat various kinds of food and do not need to do much work. So, they [tend to] suffer from Weijue (flaccidity and coldness of limbs) and Hanre (Cold-Heat Syndrome) which can be treated by massage. Therefore, Daoyin and massage were developed in the central region." By this we can say the occurrence of Daoyin is related to the central region. Further, "Sweet was the favorite flavor of the south, salty was the flavor of the north, spicy was the flavor of the east and sour was the flavor of the west." This reflects that regional conditions involve environment, climate, and human culture.

These factors should be taken into account in prescribing, teaching, and exercising Qigong. For example, when teaching Qigong in other countries, the Six Syllable Formula may not be the appropriate choice, because most non-Chinese speakers have difficulty pronouncing the six words. Many revered teachers state that the therapeutic effect depends directly on the accurate pronunciation of the words. If people can't pronounce the sounds correctly, they will probably not achieve the curative effect. Other teachers feel that the mind-intention is more important than the pronunciation and suggest that using the sounds with various pronunciations is better than not using the sounds at all.

In addition, it is generally cold in the North and hot in the South. When teaching the same Qigong form, participants in the North during winter may not be able to extend their hands and fingers, while in the South during summer they might tend to sweat and even be overcome by heat.

2. By Environment

For greatest benefit, practitioners purposefully select an environment (good Feng Shui) where they are inspired to practice Qigong. This choice of environment is based on their own specific conditions. For example, ancient Qigong masters who practiced Qigong for extending longevity frequently built a secret room or mountain hermitage to hide in and do their Qigong to enter tranquility. Inside this special environment, the temperature would be suitable and the setting was quiet and easy with little interruption. This environment helped the practitioner to enter tranquility. Historically, it has been known that those who lived the cultivation life often selected environments with green mountains and clear water to do Qigong practice. This environment is widely revered for getting satisfactory results. Imagining or visualizing a beautiful landscape can influence

one's ability to cultivate as well. It has been suggested that facing the green mountain tends to elicit a happy mood; turning towards the ocean helps to enhance the functional activity of Qi; practicing among pine and ginkgo trees assists the Qi in being dynamic and full. Therefore, whenever it is possible, we should select a healing environment, like a quiet and cool place, for Qigong practice.

3. By Body Orientations

The orientation, or facing direction, in Qigong exercise can have a significant influence on its therapeutic effect. Some Qigong forms lay strict requirements on orientations, such as Five Elements Palm, whose five sections of movement must be practiced in four directions. Each section is implemented in correspondence to the direction of treated Zang according to the Five Elements theory. *On Puncturing* from *Plain Questions* (素问・刺法论)[7] says: "Those [who suffer from] chronic kidney disease should face the south in a Yin period, tranquilizing the mind and eliminating avarice. Hold the breath (only on inhalation and not on exhalation) seven times, stretching the neck to take deep breaths…" This shows that ancient people carefully considered the influence of directional factors. Based on TCM theory, the kidney dwells in the north and its illness has the cold property. Facing south means to warm the cold with the fire of the south; holding the breath would also warm the cold. In a similar way, the other directions corresponding to the Zang-Fu organs can also be selected for Qigong practice according to TCM theory.

3. Standard Procedures and Clinical Routine of Qigong Therapy

Standard procedures of Qigong therapy in a clinical setting include Qigong prescription, Qigong form selection, management of the treatment course, and medical record documentation of the Qigong treatment.

I. Qigong Prescription

Qigong prescription means the treatment plan created by the Qigong doctor or therapist. It involves selecting the Qigong form or forms, and setting the practice standards and cautions. When diagnosis is established and treatment is determined, the appropriate Qigong prescription is key to the success of the treatment.

A. Selecting Qigong Forms

There are two ways to select Qigong forms: (1) select Qigong forms from the available forms described from both ancient times and more contemporary developments; and (2) create and compile new forms.

Though there are many existing Qigong forms, they are also limited selections especially given the wide array of syndromes and unique patient situations. Because the modern study of clinical Qigong has not been carried out for very long, the scope and depth of research has not yet been thoroughly evolved. Existing Qigong forms that correspond to the components of TCM Syndrome Recognition, Identifying Diseases, and Administering Qigong by Individual, Time, and Location are not always rich enough for each specific clinical need that presents. In many cases, it is necessary that the Qigong therapist create and compile special Qigong forms to meet the special needs. In clinic, such newly developed methods are usually created by taking some parts of common Qigong forms and reorganizing them on the basis of their principles and their functions in accord with the needs of the case. This method is very similar to the classic herbal prescription method in TCM where traditional formulas are modified for specific clinical situations.

Based on the principle of Yin and Yang balance, it is usual to select two forms—one dynamic and one static Qigong. These forms then may differ in primary or secondary effect according to the many variables taken into account. Combining the patient's conditions, individual character, etc., the therapists decide whether to emphasize dynamic or static Qigong. In general, dynamic Qigong can be used to drain the excess, whereas static Qigong is used to supplement deficiency; however, this is not absolute in all cases. For example, if doing movement combined with "Gathering Qi," it will tonify the deficiency. If practicing meditative Qigong with strong mind-intent or with long and deep breathing, it may function to purge pathogenic Qi. As a result, it is required that doctors and therapists understand and have rich experience in Qigong forms so that they are able to select therapeutic forms properly, and combine them accordingly. In addition, in the preparing for and ending the practice, some small added exercises such as mild pat massage, swallowing saliva, sending Qi to certain organs, channels, or parts of the body, etc. are frequently adopted to regulate the function of Qi and to relax the body and the mind.

B. Operational Standards

Having selected the Qigong forms, it is necessary to set the expected state of the body and mind that the Qigong exercises are intended to achieve. This is known as operational standards. The factors affecting the status of body and mind include the achievable levels of Qigong practice, the time and frequency

of practice, the practice cycle, etc. The level of Qigong means the level of the Qigong state achieved by managing the three adjustments, which includes higher level and lower level of the Qigong states. The lower level of the state indicates the ability of managing the three adjustments separately. This includes the different postures and actions in adjusting the body, the fast/slow or deep/shallow breathing in adjusting breath, and the strong or light mind-intent in adjusting mind focus, and they all have direct influence on the Qigong state. The higher level of the Qigong state indicates the ability of integrating the three adjustments into one, which varies in integrating the body and the mind into one and integrating the human and the heaven into one, as well.

Time is always set according to the case and refers to the time to do Qigong exercises, usually 30–60 minutes. It is said that the shorter the time, the smaller the strength, and vice versa. Frequency is the interval between the two practices, commonly 4–12 hours. If the interval is short the intensity may be increased and vice versa. The practicing cycle refers to the duration or the days of practice, commonly about 30 days, or even longer—a few months or a few years. In many cases people respond well to Qigong and it can become a lifelong practice.

For the weak patient, due to either recent acute medical events or to chronic illness, it is appropriate to employ a short time of practice, a long interval of practice, and a long cycle of practice. In contrast, for patients with fairly robust vital Qi, who are capable of toleration, the method should be a longer time of practice, but shorter in both interval and cycle. In summary, the Qigong therapist should present a comprehensive set of operational standards and have a good idea of how the program should progress in accord with the patients' unique needs and capabilities.

To evaluate the appropriateness of the operational standards, we consider two aspects:

1. Observe the reactions of patients *during* Qigong practice. If the sensation of Qi circulation is little or not obvious, the targets of the treatment plan may have been set too low. If warmth is felt easily, and skin and muscles open and drain as moisture and a slight sweat, the targets of the treatment plan are correct. When it is too sweaty, the targets of the treatment plan are set too high.

2. Observe the reactions of patients *after* Qigong practice. After a period of exercises, if no improvement is felt, it might indicate the intensity of the Qigong practice is too low. If both body and mind feel exhausted and the patient is unable to restore energy by the next practice time, it indicates operational standards are set at an intensity that is too high.

C. Cautions

Since Qigong therapy is mainly carried out by the patients themselves, it is necessary to suggest to patients that they make some changes to their daily life according to the disorder and the treatment. In addition, some diseases have their own contraindications such as avoiding certain foods or certain movements that are contraindicated. Taking all these into consideration is called the "cautions"—including diet, work and rest, emotional state, supplementary treatments, and any issues in relationship to family assistance or nursing needs.

II. Qigong Treatment Methods

Treatment methods refer to the practice procedure of the treatment form. These are classified into two categories: internal practice (Neilian Fa, 内练法) and external therapy (Waizhi Fa, 外治法). The selection of treatment method mainly relates to Qigong prescription and the insights of the doctor or therapist. The prescriptions discussed above mainly belong to internal practice. These prescriptions are given to the patients and should be understood thoroughly. External therapy (also known as Qi Emission or Qi Transmission) also needs prescription; however, because this is more of a therapeutic activity provided by the therapist, the plan, as in acupuncture or physiotherapy, is not necessarily shared with the patient.

A. Internal (Self) Practice

Internal practice is defined as Medical Qigong that the patients do to apply self-treatment according to the therapist's diagnosis and corresponding Qigong prescription. This form is to stimulate self-healing capability. This practice derives benefit from the internal Qi of the patient and the external forces of nature, but does not involve external force from the therapist. This is the primary form of Medical Qigong therapy.

The clinical application of internal therapy has a long history. In *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic*, there are many essays that mention internal practice. It was called Daoyin in ancient times, and it was discussed together with stone needle, strong herbal medicine, moxibustion, acupuncture, etc. as the five popular therapies in a special chapter. *On Unusual Therapies* from *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* discussed different therapeutic methods for different diseases. In *General Treatise on Etiology and Symptomology of Various Diseases* by Chao Yuanfang in the Sui dynasty, it was discussed in detail that a Qigong prescription was given according to each syndrome and sign. Many medical experts in different dynasties did thorough exploration on Qigong study. They included Bian Que (扁鹊), Hua Tuo (华佗), Zhang Ji (张机), Ge Hong (葛洪),

Tao Hongjing (陶弘景), Sun Simiao (孙思邈), Wang Tao (王焘), Liu Wansu (刘完素), Zhang Congzheng (张从正), Li Dongyuan (李东垣), Zhu Danxi (朱丹溪), Li Shizhen (李时珍), Yang Jizhou (杨继洲), Zhang Jingyue (张景岳), Wang Kentang (王肯堂), Ye Tianshi (叶天士), and Xue Ji (薛己).

In modern times, under the influence of Western medicine, some Qigong therapists began to apply internal practice to treat cases in terms of modern diagnostic methods, as *Yingshi Zi's Sitting in Meditation Exercises* for treating tuberculosis; Internal Nourishing Qigong for treating peptic ulcer and chronic gastritis; Relaxation Qigong for treating exhaustion syndrome, hypertension, and neurosis; and New Qigong Therapy for treating cancer. All of these produced positive and even surprising results. Clinical practice of Qigong therapy throughout history has suggested that internal practice is one of the most widely and frequently used treatment methods in Chinese medicine, with very promising results.

Internal practice, in other words, is to teach Qigong to a patient in order to treat the illness of the patient. It requires the Qigong therapist to have full knowledge of the selected Qigong method, not only knowing how to practice, but also understanding why the practice is conducted. In addition, the therapist must have done Qigong his or herself, so that it is possible to demonstrate the form, and answer questions and solve problems that may arise during the Qigong practice. Otherwise, it is impossible to communicate Qigong theory to the patients and impossible to carry out Administering Qigong by TCM Syndrome Recognition or successfully select the Qigong forms for the individual patient's unique needs and limitations.

Before teaching Qigong, the therapist also needs to have a full understanding of the condition of the patient including his or her diagnosis and physique. It is especially important to have complete knowledge of Qigong. In diagnosis, it is critical to take full advantage of the measures and methods used in TCM, Medical Qigong, and conventional medicine, and to use these methods to carefully investigate whether the condition of a patient is fit for Qigong treatment. The principles of Qigong therapy discussed previously, including administering Qigong based on syndrome and disease identification and administering Qigong suitably to individual, time, and location, should all be used in this evaluation process. Typically, the evaluation process is combined with the process of making the diagnosis.

For patients suitable for Qigong therapy, the operational standards are set after the diagnosis. Then, on the basis of the operational standards, the Qigong prescription is carefully made in accord with holism and the other key principles and characteristics of TCM. As discussed previously, compared with the other Chinese therapies, Qigong requires relatively simple operational standards, which is choosing either the tonifying method or the reducing method. The

forms in Qigong prescription can be selected from various clinical methods described from ancient to present times, or can be created and compiled based on the three adjustments and the needs and capacities appropriate to the individual case. The commonly used Qigong forms referenced in this book mostly belong to internal practice Qigong.

After selecting a Qigong form, teach the patient to utilize the practice appropriately. When the therapist guides the patient in entering into the Qigong state, it is important to manage the harmonization of the body, breathing, and mind. The Qigong therapist needs to keep in mind that integration of the three adjustments is the underlying goal of all Qigong practice. It is important, however, to understand that the three adjustments do not always function equally unless the patient is very familiar with Qigong. For different diseases and different stages of practice, the focus on the three adjustments may be alternated correspondingly. This will be discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter.

B. External Therapy—Qi Emission, Qi Transmission

External therapy refers to external Qi therapy—emitting Qi from the Qigong practitioner (master, therapist, doctor) to treat the patient. It can include Qigong massage, point-touching with Qi, acupuncture with emission of Qi, etc. This type of Qigong treatment can be classified as touching and non-touching styles. Currently, experts in the fields of medicine and science hold differing opinions on external Qi therapy. The details of this are discussed in Chapter 3.

External Qi therapy means that the Qigong practitioner through certain skills consciously releases his or her internal Qi and directs it to the patient to harmonize Qi and function to treat illness. The effect of this type of therapy has been observed and documented throughout history, with numerous explanations and arguments to explain the mechanism of the therapy. Possible effects have included psychological, physical or biological, and energetic aspects.

This therapy has been passed down from ancient times; it was originally called "emitting Qi." In historical literature many cases of external Qi were recorded, for example the knack of spreading the Qi in volume I of *Knack of Adjusting Qi by Mr. Tai Wu* (太无先生气诀) from *The Daoists—Bin Department—Art and Literature, New History of the Tang Dynasty* (新唐书 • 艺文志 • 丙部子录 • 道家类).[13] "When treating patients with Qi (external), you need to select Qi from certain directions based on the disease of the patient and emit the Qi to the patient's body. Make the patient face the selected direction—tranquilizing the mind and eliminating avarice. Emitting Qi in this way can help patients to rehabilitate by themselves. Also, allow the patient to adjust the breathing and

neutralize worry—then the evil (pathogenic) Qi is abolished. If the vital Qi flows well, the evil Qi will decline."

The writer and expert on health preservation in the Song dynasty, Su Shi (苏轼), recorded in *Dongpuo's Annals* or *Dongpuo Zhi Lin* (东坡志林),[14] "When the Qigong practitioner practices well enough for himself, he is able to emit Qi to other people. Daoist priest Li Ruozhi (李若之) in Du Xia (都下) can do so, namely 'spreading the Qi.' Ruozhi sat opposite to my son Dai (迨) who was weak since his childhood, and emitted Qi to him. My son felt warm in his abdomen as the sunshine in the morning." In similar texts such as *Eight Essays for Cherishing Life* (遵生八笺)[9] and *Key to Cultivation* (类修要诀)[15] it was written as "The Rhymed Formula of Emitting Qi for Treating Patients": "Over a long time of cultivating and practicing to achieve fetal breathing, the therapist can diagnose disease from a distance by checking Zang-Fu organs with external Qi. For children, inquiring the Five Qi and tranquilizing mind is important. Direct Qi and make the child accept it. Accompany Qi emission with massage for several treatments. Destroy pathogenic Qi by mind intent and the illness surely can be cured promptly. As the evil declines, the health is restored." According to the texts listed above, external Qi therapy is not a creation of modern times—it has been refined over many centuries.

Emitting Qi requires specific training. Generally speaking, the Qi is mobilized through mind intention, employing respiration as its power and utilizing the meridians and collaterals as its path. Qi is then released to the exterior from the key acupoints. There are a lot of ways to train emitting Qi externally. We briefly introduce just one of them as follows:

Stand relaxed and quiet with mouth closed and the tongue propped up against the top of the mouth. Align the vertebrae in the center of the body from the Baihui (GV-20) elixir point to the center of each of the feet. Put the left thumb in the left hand pressing on the heart of the palm and bound with the other fingers into a fist. Place the left hand on the waist. Extend the right arm forward, open the right hand naturally and relax the Laogong point (PC-8). Breathe in and out through the nose, and apply reverse abdominal breathing. When emitting Qi, we use mind intention and exhalation to move the Qi. Imagine the Qi in the lower elixir field moving up through the Danzhong (CV-17) into the right arm and through the right forearm, emitting out of the body from the Laogong (PC-8) or the ten fingers, etc.

In order to achieve a clinical effect, the healer of external Qigong needs to emit Qi with a certain speed, intensity, and focus. Intense and thorough training for Qi emission therapy is required to be done step by step. No emitting of Qi should be done when the healer feels exhausted. After the emitting of Qi, the healer needs to adjust sleep, diet, etc. correspondingly.

Qigong massage, Qigong point-touching, and Qigong acupuncture are the treatment methods of massage, point-touching, and acupuncture combined with emission of Qi, which is an external Qigong therapy performed in complement to other therapies.[ii]

III. The Treatment Process of Qigong

The treatment process can include internal practice and external therapy. External therapy is the process of the Qigong practitioner (master, therapist, doctor) treating the patient by emitting Qi. It is the process of teaching the patients how to practice, and treating the illness condition by patients' self-practices. The latter one is introduced here.

Internal practice serves as the basis in clinical Qigong therapy. It requires the therapist to guide the patients to consistently execute the Qigong exercises to get well. It involves teaching and leading the patients in learning and practicing Qigong, as well as tracking and recording the patient's progress. Due to the unique nature of each patient and each syndrome, the Qigong therapist pays special attention to coaching and mentoring the patient's progress and modifying the forms to keep the patient enthusiastic and engaged.

A. Teaching the Forms

The Qigong therapist needs to teach the selected Qigong form to the patients until they are able to practice it by themselves. The ways of teaching the Qigong form may vary, involving lecture, presentation, guidance, etc.

The lecture aims to support the patients in knowing and understanding Qigong correctly from the view of medicine and science. In addition the lecture intends to encourage them, enhance their confidence, and support the full development of their subjective initiative to do the exercises perseveringly. The content of a lecture could include the general overview and background of the Qigong forms, the keys to the practice, cautions, efficacy, etc. The therapist should be especially careful to encourage patients to avoid the overanxious pursuit for quick results. This is important for achieving efficacy and for preventing deviations from the normal health enhancement potential of Qigong.

Demonstration is the most important way to teach Qigong forms. Not only can this be done by the therapist, but it also can be done by hanging charts,

ii It is also common for proponents of Qi emission to teach that the release of Qi does not come from the practitioner, but is instead transmitted from nature and the universe through the intention of the practitioner. Given that the mechanism for Qi emission therapy is not yet clear, it is possible that those who teach to release internal Qi and those who teach to channel universal Qi are both correct (Roger Jahnke, OMD).

models, PowerPoint presentations, Flash animation, video tape, VCD, DVD, cassette, etc. All these media tools can be used repeatedly and can help to emphasize the key points and explain the possible problems in Qigong practice. Informative and inspiring exposition, standard presentation, and multi-media teaching measures can all help to guarantee a good and comprehensive understanding of Qigong therapy and help patients to achieve the optimum result.

There are two delivery methods in teaching Qigong forms: group teaching and individual teaching. In general, group teaching is better. In the group setting, the patients are able to inspire each other and to teach and learn from each other. This not only can reduce the demand for the teacher, but also can create a better learning environment, which in turn can enhance the patient's interest in and commitment to practice Qigong. We may put patients with similar diseases into one group—10–30 people is preferable. It is best if the number is not too many. With larger groups the therapist is unable to attend to all of the people effectively. This can deteriorate the efficacy. On the other hand, too few people makes it difficult to build the Qigong atmosphere and may fail to stimulate the enthusiasm which supports the best results. Group teaching can be combined with individual teaching. Individual teaching normally is one-to-one teaching. For some specific difficult motions or mistakes during the practice of the three adjustments, the Qigong master may guide people individually, analyzing and correcting the inappropriate postures and motions immediately.

B. Leading the Patients to Practice Qigong

Following the introductory lecture, demonstration, and guidance, the Qigong therapist leads the patients to do Qigong exercises together. An environment with tranquility and fresh air is ideal. During the course of the practice, the teacher should conform to the best teaching practices—words of command and instruction should be clear. It is acceptable to play audio or video material while the teacher checks the students. When errors are such that they either compromise the patient's comfort or the effectiveness of the practice, the teacher corrects it right away. It is not important for patients to do the practice perfectly—the three adjustments combined with an atmosphere of restfulness and lightheartedness is most important.

It is suggested that the patients take part in the group practice at least in the beginning. When they master the keys proficiently then patients can practice by themselves. In self-practice, for some, it is helpful to have audio or video learning aids for support.

C. Examining the Progress

During the treatment process, the Qigong therapist needs to check each patient's Qigong progress, to assess the treatment effect. Examining the progress is an important aspect of supervising and encouraging the patients to ensure the highest level of efficacy. It is also the process through which Qigong therapists accumulate experience in the clinic and enhance their professional skills. Therapists may praise and encourage the enthusiasm of the patients, and point out common problems and the ways to solve them.

According to patients' conditions, there are two methods used to examine the progress: "selected examination" and "complete examination." The former is used to check some parts of the practice, and the latter is used to observe the whole course. Usually four diagnostic methods are applied to examine the patients: behavior with composure; focused breathing; muscle relaxation; and proper posture and correct motion to meet the requirements of the Qigong form. Moreover, the therapist needs to observe the exterior to understand the interior. This means that external signs of practice efficiency and the state of the patients in their actions, when observed carefully, can reveal the extent to which the patient's health condition and internal function are improving. Always pay close attention to the practicing process and the patient's efficacy in executing the practices. On the one hand, it is important to predict the efficacy depending on the practice process of each patient; on the other hand, it is important to adjust the process based on the patient's current efficacy, in order to guarantee the ultimate effectiveness of the Qigong therapy program.

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CHAPTER 8

Examples of Clinical Application

Qigong therapy has a long and rich history of application for the treatment of disease in Chinese medical practice to both enhance natural function and subdue pathogenic factors. The types of disease treated by Qigong therapy have varied during different historical eras due to the changes in natural and social environment in the numerous dynasties and historical periods over the past several thousand years. This chapter will review and give examples of the applications of both ancient and modern Qigong therapies for common diseases over the last half century.

1. Hypertension

The normal systolic blood pressure of adults should be equal to or less than 120 mm Hg, while the diastolic blood pressure should be equal to or less than 80 mm Hg. Hypertension is defined when elevated blood pressure is exhibited with systolic blood pressure equal to or exceeding 140 mm Hg and diastolic blood pressure equal to or exceeding 90 mm Hg. Clinically, the diagnosis of high blood pressure is determined by multiple measurements in several consecutive days. There are two types of hypertension: primary hypertension (over 95% of cases) with unknown causes, and secondary hypertension (less than 5% of cases) with associated kidney disease or diabetes. The etiology of hypertension is not yet fully defined, but it is believed that, in addition to heredity, multiple factors from disease can cause the blood pressure regulatory mechanism to become imbalanced. Later-stage hypertension can impair the function of multiple organs, such as the heart, brain, and kidneys.

Hypertensive disease can be classified into "dizziness" and "headache" categories in TCM. The clinical symptoms are dizziness, distending headache, tinnitus, flushed face, irritability, short temper, and insomnia. Fatigue, stress, or anger often worsen the condition, which may be accompanied by distension of the sides, a bitter taste in the mouth, heavy headache, distension in the chest and abdomen, nausea and vomiting saliva, poor appetite, and drowsiness. Based on TCM theory, the etiology and pathology of hypertension are: liver Yang rising and obstruction of Wind-phlegm or stagnated blood as a result of imbalanced emotion, poor diet, and internal organ and body weakness.

The main treatment methods are soothing the liver and descending the Yang, as well as eliminating the Wind and dissolving the phlegm. The Qigong forms for hypertension are usually characterized by relaxation, descending Qi, and achieving a state of tranquility. In terms of the three adjustments this can be experienced by relaxing the body, descending the Qi, and tranquilizing the mind.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Blood Pressure Reducing Forms

1. Lifting and Pressing Hands with Palms Facing the Feet

1. Adjusting the body: Stand naturally with the feet shoulder-width apart (the tips of the toes pointed slightly outwards); direct the center of gravity through both heels in order to relax the body and adjust the breathing. Flex the arms (empty the armpits and flank region, and extend the elbows outwards a little). Place the hands in front of the hips with the palms down and Laogong (PC-8) on the palms facing Yongquan (KI-1) on the feet. Raise and lower the palms slowly, softly, and continuously.
2. Adjusting the mind: Keep the mind on Qihai (CV-6) for a while and then to Laogong (PC-8) and Yongquan (KI-1). Focus the mind on the sensation of Qi at the palms and soles.
3. Adjusting the breathing: Apply natural breathing.

2. Dredging the Conception and Thrusting Vessels

1. Adjusting the body: Place the arms naturally at the sides of the body and then raise both arms up above the head and exert a lifting force with the palms facing upward. Lower the palms facing inwards down the center line, passing the face, and when they are at chest level, move

them apart slightly on the sides and lower them along the thrusting vessel until they reach the hips. Direct the palms downward, separately, facing the feet. Repeat this movement nine times.

2. Adjusting the mind: Imagine both arms moving out of water and water flowing downwards along the arms when raising them. Imagine drizzle dropping from the sky while exerting a lifting force with the palms. Imagine taking a shower in the rain and the water continuously moving down along the body into the well under the feet while moving the palms downwards along the conception and thrusting vessels.
3. Adjusting the breathing: Inhale while raising the arms with palms facing upward, and exhale while moving both palms downwards along the conception or thrusting vessels.

3. Dredging the Governor and Belt Vessels

1. Adjusting the body: The movements for dredging the governor vessel in this form are similar to those for the conception vessel in the previous form, but here the practitioner should imagine the governor vessel in the back of the body. For dredging the belt vessel, lower both hands along the anterior midline to the navel, touch the navel with the middle fingers, then move both hands backward with palms up alternatively along the belt vessel, and touch the Mingmen point.
2. Adjusting the mind: While dredging the governor vessel, imagine the falling drizzle soaking through the spine before smoothly pouring into a well under the ground with gurgling sounds. While dredging the belt vessel, imagine moving both palms in the water against resistance and sensing hot or cold water.
3. Adjusting the breathing: This is the same breathing pattern as that in dredging the conception vessel, but with prolonged exhaling while dredging the belt vessel, since more movements are involved.

4. Twisting, Waving, and Swinging the Spine

1. Adjusting the body: Place the hands on each side of the waist with thumbs pointing forward. Move the chin upward with the head up, then move the chin forward, downward, and inward, which leads to a waving movement of the spinal vertebra vertically back and forth from cervix to sacrum as a moving worm. Repeat nine times. Move the hips horizontally so that the spine twists horizontally toward left or right. Repeat nine times, coordinated with the movements of the hands along

the belt vessel in the section of dredging the belt vessel. While lowering the palms down from the face to chest to abdomen in the section of dredging the conception vessel, swing the spinal vertebra horizontally to the left and right and from the bottom to the top while raising the hands up from both sides of the body.

2. Adjusting the mind: While moving the body and spine vertically and horizontally, imagine the body immersed in the water. Try to feel the sensation of the body moving against the water by waving and swinging the spine to induce the sense of Qi of the whole body.
3. Adjusting the breathing: The requirement for breathing in this form is the same as that in dredging the conception, governor, thrusting, and belt vessels. Prolong the breath, since more movements are required. So, after the movements of twisting, waving, and swinging, put the palms above the feet and wait a few minutes until normal breathing is resumed.

5. Closing Movements

1. Adjusting the body: Place the hands overlapped at Guanyuan (CV-4, 3 cun below the umbilicus), palms facing inward (the left hand touching the body for the male and the right hand touching the body for the female), quietly nourishing the Qi.
2. Adjusting the mind: Focus the mind (withdraw the sight from looking out to reflect inwardly) on the inner elixir field or Dantian (about 3 cun below the umbilicus, deep in the abdomen).
3. Adjusting the breathing: Breathe naturally.

B. Relaxation Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6 of this book.

C. The Six Syllable Formula

See the details in Chapter 6 of this book.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

A condition with complicated signs and symptoms, the main cause (root) of hypertension is disharmonized Yin and Yang, which manifest as internally generated wind, phlegm, and blood stasis (branches), and is located in the liver

and kidneys. It can be divided into two major syndromes when treated with Qigong.

A. Deficiency of Liver and Kidney Yin and Hyperactivity of Liver Yang

Clinical manifestations: Dizziness and vertigo, distension of the head and headache, tinnitus, flushed complexion, quick temper, insomnia, overwork or anger (which worsen the condition), with additional symptoms of distension along both sides of the rib cage, bitter taste in the mouth, thin and yellow coating on the tongue, and wiry and forceful pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Utilize Blood Pressure Reducing Qigong, the Six Syllable Formula, or Relaxation Qigong as the primary forms, and Standing Stake and Health Preserving Qigong as supplements.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Practice the whole set of Blood Pressure Reducing Qigong 1–2 times a day and increase daily practice time gradually. The movement should be slow, light, and smooth with a relaxed mind. Regarding adjusting the mind, focus the mind on exhaling to make the breath thin and prolonged, and relax the mind while inhaling since it can be shorter. Therefore, adjusting the mind is closely associated with adjusting the breathing.
2. Beginners may precede the Tri-Line Relaxation Sequence with teeth tapping, tongue stirring, and saliva gargling as an introductory practice. Then practice the Tri-Line Relaxation Sequence. Breathe naturally. Articulate the word "Song" (Chinese for relax or relaxation) silently while exhaling. Keep the mind on Yongquan (KI-1) and the lower elixir field, and conduct Qi downward to the lower part of the body. End the practice with hair combing, beating the heavenly drum, and rubbing the hands and face from Health Preservation Qigong. Allow 30 minutes for each session and 1–2 sessions a day.
3. Patients in the remission stage with manifestations of liver and kidney Yin deficiency may practice the Six Syllable Formula in addition, articulating the XU or CHUI sounds silently while exhaling to nourish liver and kidney Yin.

4. Patients with a severe condition of liver Yang hyperactivity may rub the soles of the feet or knead Qiaogong (a point in Tuina, located at the lateral side of the stenocleidomastoid muscle) alternately after completing the movements, 100–200 times each side.

B. Accumulation of Phlegm Turbidity

Clinical manifestations: Dizziness and headache, heavy and banded sensation of the head, fullness in the chest and abdomen, nausea, vomiting saliva and sputum, poor appetite, sleepiness, white and greasy coating on the tongue, soft and slippery pulse, or wiry and slippery pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Blood Pressure Reducing Qigong, the Six Syllable Formula, or Relaxation Qigong as the primary forms, combined with Internal Nourishing Qigong, Eight Pieces of Brocade, and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Practice the whole set of Blood Pressure Reducing Qigong 1–2 times a day; advance step by step.
2. Beginners may start with the Tri-Line Relaxation Sequence in the initial stage. Use abdominal breathing while keeping the mind focused on the lower elixir field. Adjust the breathing rhythm by silently chanting. End the practice with ascending-descending/opening-closing at the elixir field, rubbing the abdomen in a circle with overlapped palms, combing the hair, and then rubbing the hands and face. Practice these forms for 30 minutes, 1–2 times a day.
3. Patients with spleen deficiency as the main manifestation may add the Six Syllable Formula to the practice; articulate the HU or XI sounds silently during exhalation.
4. One may supplement with "Holding the Heaven with Two Hands to Regulate the Three Jiao" and "Raising One Arm up to Regulate the Spleen and Stomach" from Eight Pieces of Brocade.

III. Cautions

1. Loosen one's belt and any other restrictive clothes, wear flat shoes, and practice while neither very hungry nor very full. The surroundings

for practice should be relatively quiet, with plenty of fresh air. Do not practice Qigong after drinking alcohol or when feeling upset. It is recommended that the practitioner drink a cup of warm water before practice. In addition to morning practice, consider performing the recommended forms before going to bed in the evening.

2. Women should not practice Qigong during menstruation or pregnancy.
3. Check the blood pressure and blood cholesterol, and take a routine urine test, ophthalmic test, and ECG periodically or as needed, in order to be aware of and monitor the body condition and to strengthen the confidence in the practice as well. Medication may be applied according to the intensity of the disease and the vitality of the patient.
4. Cultivate good living habits. Control emotions such as anger, irritability, and restlessness. Control the diet with reduced salt and calories.
5. When the blood pressure is being stabilized, continuously practice to maintain the effect.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for hypertension can be found in the Qigong forms for "dizziness" and "headaches" in ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classic documentation are as follows.

A. "Dizziness Caused by Wind" from *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun·Feng Tou Xuan Lun* (诸病源候论 • 风头眩论)

In the description of "Health Preserving Daoyin," it says "Bringing the right knee to the chest with both hands relieves dizziness due to the wind."

Note: According to TCM theory, Wind is a crucial cause of dizziness. Hypertensive dizziness is due to the disturbance of endogenous liver Wind. The liver Zang is substantially Yin but functionally Yang, its Qi prefers to circulate freely. Hyperactivity of liver Qi (liver function) without resolution results in dizziness. Therefore, soothing the liver and subduing Yang should be the main treatment principle. The key point here is to bring the right knee to the chest as close and tight as possible. It corresponds to TCM theory that "right and left are paths of Yin and Yang" and the right belongs to Yin and dominates the descending of Qi.

B. *Essentials for Health Preservation* or *Bao Sheng Mi Yao* (保生秘要)

"Sit with one leg on the other knee; close the seven orifices by pressing Ermen (SJ-21), eyes, mouth and nose with two fingers. Bend the body slightly forward to induce the rise of vital Qi. This way the evil (imbalanced Qi) in the brain can be eliminated (brought into a more balanced state." "Keep the mind on the navel and the sore area in the head. Direct Qi from the top of the head along the lateral sides of the head down to the area below the heart.

While Qi passes through the areas of phlegm accumulation, turn the Qi circularly in the abdomen several times, and keep the mind focused on the navel area."

Note: Be sure to conduct Qi back to its origin after practicing either conducting genuine Qi upward to eliminate the evil Qi from the head or moving Qi to resolve phlegm. Genuine Qi originates at the lower elixir field and flows upward along the Conception and Governor vessels. At the end of the Qi movements, genuine Qi should be conducted back to the lower elixir field. Otherwise, the hyperactivity of genuine Qi will lead to deterioration of health and aggravation of the disease. The postures of bending the body and neck and closing the nine orifices assist the genuine Qi in ascending up to the head to eliminate the evils. It should then circulate downward to neutralize rising Yang.

C. *Essentials for Health Preservation* (保生秘要)

"Contemplate nothingness, sit quietly and hold the breath. Cover the ears with the palms and beat the heavenly drum; rub Yongquan (KI-1); knead the knees; sit quiet again; articulate the syllable HE nine times during exhalation. Practice this form to calm the mind."

Note: Based on the TCM concept "liver and kidneys have the same source," this form is intended to regulate Qi movement by nourishing kidney Yin to subdue the liver wood. The maneuvers of contemplating nothingness, sitting quietly, holding the breath, beating the heavenly drum and rubbing Yongquan (KI-1) aim to nourish kidney Yin. They are followed by the maneuver of articulating HE during exhalation to reinforce the kidney water by reducing heart fire. The desired effects can be obtained through regular practice.

D. *Essentials for Health Preservation* (保生秘要)

"Sit with subtle breathing, close the mouth, clench teeth together, pinch the nostrils with fingers of the spleen and intestine, open the eyes wide, and let Qi enter the ear's orifices until a sound is heard. Repeat the practice for two or three days until obstruction is removed from the ears." "Reverse listening, focus the mind inwardly and maintain tranquility. In addition, hold Qi in the mouth and nose, focus carefully. Imagine Qi exiting from the ears and then take it back in by listening to the inner sounds. In doing so, the function of ears may be improved."

Note: Dizziness due to Yang excess (ultimately due to Yin deficiency) is usually accompanied by ringing in the ears with a louder than normal sound plus dizziness. This is due to Yin deficiency and is usually accompanied by high-pitch tinnitus with reduced hearing. Pinch the nostrils with the thumb and index finger to hold the breath, and conduct vital Qi to the ears to eliminate the tinnitus. For the latter cases, gather and retain essence Qi in a quiet state and prevent vital Qi from dispersing externally. Thus, tinnitus can be cured. Select the forms carefully according to the conditions and diseases diagnosed in the clinic.

Although hypertension is mainly caused by Liver dysfunction in TCM theory, it also closely relates to the kidneys. Therefore, any exercise for regulating the kidneys may be applied. For more information, please refer to the relevant citations in *Incisive Light on the Source of Miscellaneous Disease*, *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* and *The Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies.*

2. Coronary Artery Disease

CAD is the abbreviation for coronary artery disease, also known as ischemic heart disease. It is also often called coronary heart disease. The main pathology of this disease is myocardial ischemia commonly caused by narrowing of the arteries and reduction of blood flowing due to atherosclerosis. Its major clinical manifestations are latent CAD, angina pectoris, myocardial infarction (MI), etc.

Latent CAD is manifested by lack of subjective symptoms, but ischemic changes are indicated in the ECG under the quiet state or with increased heart activities. Angina pectoris is classified into the stable type and non-stable type according to its clinical manifestations. The former has the typical symptom of paroxysmal chest pain, described as pressure or suffocating discomfort induced by fatigue, excitement, heavy meal, coldness, etc. The pain usually lasts 3–10 minutes and seldom over 15 minutes. The pain can be relieved with 3–5 minutes' rest or taking nitroglycerin (underneath the tongue). Non-stable angina pectoris may occur in the quiet state or during sleeping without any obvious inducing factors. It is marked by continuous severe chest pain, which cannot be relieved by rest or taking nitroglycerin. The clinical manifestations of MI are sudden continuous severe chest pain; the area and the feature of the pain are similar to angina pectoris, but the pain is not typically relieved by taking nitroglycerin. Moreover, it is often complicated with shock, heart failure, arrhythmia, etc. Mostly typical MI features can be found in the ECG. Remote MI lacks the above symptoms, but pathological Q wave is usual in the ECG.

CAD could be considered as "chest pain," "real heart pain," or "painful chest obstruction (or chest Bi syndrome)" in TCM. The TCM pathogenesis is obstruction of Qi and blood in the chest due to external cold invasion, improper diet, emotional stress, and deficiencies associated with aging. The location of the disease is the heart Zang organ, and it is closely related with dysfunctions of the liver, the spleen, and the kidney Zang organs. Deficiency and excess are two aspects of its pathogenesis. The deficiency type of chest Bi syndrome is mostly due to aging with weakened kidney Qi and kidney function leading eventually to weakness and dysfunctions of the heart, spleen, and liver, and causing further chest pain. The excess type of chest Bi syndrome can be caused by Qi stagnation, blood stasis, cold congealment, and phlegm accumulation; they are attributed to obstruction of the heart meridian and inactivity of heart Yang, resulting in chest pain.

Clinically, the combination of deficiency and excess is seen in most cases. *Changing Rules of Zang Qi Function in Four Seasons* from *Plain Questions* says that "patients with diseases of Heart Zang might suffer from pain inside the chest, pain along and under the rib cage, upper back pain as well as pain in the

arms." The common clinical manifestations of the syndrome are dull chest pain, chest oppression with shortness of breath, dizziness, palpitation, fatigue, lack of energy to speak, aversion to cold, cold hands and feet, pale complexion, sweating easily when moving as well as possible severe chest pain radiating to the left shoulder and arm, pale and dark fingers and nails, purple tongue and lips, vomiting saliva and sputum, etc.

Heart Yang deficiency, deficiency of the liver, the spleen, and the kidney, Qi stagnation and blood stasis, and the coexistence of deficiency and excess syndrome are the characteristics of CAD; Qigong therapy should treat the causes and the manifestations together. One should coordinate Daoyin movements with the mental induction of Qi, moving the Qi in order to circulate blood. Patients with poor constitution and severe conditions should apply more static Qigong as the primary form, with dynamic Qigong as a supplement. Those with more stable conditions may adopt Qigong forms the other way round.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Qigong for CAD

1. Posture

Stand naturally, quieten the mind and relax the whole body, drop the shoulders and the elbows, and breathe naturally with the eyes closed slightly. Press the tongue against the upper palate and keep a smile on the face. Open the fingers slightly, but form a shape of "O" with the thumb and the middle finger and palms facing downward. Stand naturally with the feet parallel to each other, one shoulder-width apart; flex the knees slightly. Draw in the chest and straighten the back. Draw the lower jaw in a little, retract the abdomen slightly, and tighten the anus. One may rock back and forth slightly during the practice.

2. Keep the Mind on Conducting the Qi

Visualize yourself practicing the form on the beach with the red sun rising above the sea. Regulate the mind, chest, abdomen, and extremities, as well as all the inner parts of the body, into a void state. When one mingles the body with the sunshine, Qi and blood will circulate smoothly. Expel the evil Qi (pathogenic) from Yongquan (KI-1). Visualize white sparkles at Laogong (PC-8) and Lingdao (HT-4), and a white light or Qi circling through the thumb and middle finger.

3. Conducting the Qi in the Lower Extremities

Resume the same posture as before, or take a lying or sitting position. Conduct Qi along the Tri-Line Relaxation routes once. Gather Qi at the lower elixir field and keep the mind focused there. When a sensation of adequate Qi is felt, conduct the Qi to Huiyin (CV-1), along the lateral side of the left thigh, calf, and foot dorsum, and then to the big toe, 2nd toe, 3rd toe, 4th toe, and 5th toe. Then conduct the Qi to the left Yongquan (KI-1), the medial malleolus, and along the inner aspect of the left calf and thigh back to the lower elixir field. Remain quiet to foster Qi for a moment. Then repeat the whole exercise along the right leg and foot in the same way.

4. Conducting the Qi in the Upper Extremities

The exercise for the upper limbs is applied only when Qi is conducted by the mind and the sensation of Qi is felt flowing in the lower limbs. After the Qi is fostered in the lower elixir for a while, conduct the Qi up along the left breast, shoulder, lateral side of the left upper arm, forearm, and dorsum of hand to the left thumb, index finger, middle finger, ring finger, little finger, and the left palm—Laogong (PC-8) and Shaofu (HT-8). Then conduct the Qi along the inner aspect of the left forearm, upper arm, breast, and middle-line of chest bone down to Danzhong (CV-17). Afterwards, conduct Qi upward along the right breast, shoulder, lateral side of the right upper arm, forearm, and dorsum of hand to the right thumb, index finger, middle finger, little finger, and palm. Then conduct Qi along the inner aspect of the right forearm, upper arm, and shoulder to Lianquan (CV-23) and Chengjiang (CV-24), the tongue body and tongue root. Finally conduct the Qi downward to the lower elixir field. Breathe naturally and keep the mind focused there for a while to foster Qi.

5. Closing Form

Breathing naturally, conduct the Qi back to its origin, keep the mind on the Dantian, the lower elixir, and close the exercise by kneading the abdomen.

B. Strengthening Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Relaxation Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

With complicated signs and symptoms, CAD can be differentiated into more syndromes clinically. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major syndromes: obstruction of Yang in the chest and deficiency of Yang Qi.

A. Obstruction of Yang in the Chest

Clinical manifestations: Angina pectoris, or oppressive chest pain, with a sensation of suffocation radiating to the left shoulder and arm, lusterless and pale nails, dark purple lips and tongue, or dark tongue with purple spots on the sides, spitting phlegm or vomiting saliva, thin white coating or white greasy coating on the tongue, and wiry or thready and slippery pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Qigong for CAD, Strengthening Qigong, and Relaxation Qigong as the primary forms, and Tu-Na (Tu-Na = breathing) Daoyin Qigong, Health Preserving Qigong, the Six Syllable Formula, and Eight Pieces of Brocade as supplementary practices.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. Use Qigong for CAD as the primary form: practice two times daily, 30–60 minutes each time, in the morning and evening consistently for 100 days.
2. For those who select Eight Pieces of Brocade as a supplementary practice, perform the four sections: "Clenching Fist and Gazing with Eyes Widely Open to Increase Power and Qi," "Holding the Heaven with Two Hands to Regulate the Three Jiao," "Looking Backward to Treat Five Over-Consumptions and Seven Injuries," and "Pulling the Toes Up and Down to Strengthen the Kidney and Lower Back." Do each three times for each practice session.
3. For those who select the Tu-Na method or Breathing Training as a supplementary practice, lay both hands in front of the lower abdomen with the fingers of one hand pointed to the fingers of another hand. While inhaling, imagine Qi entering the body from the middle point between the two eyebrows and moving downward to the chest and lower abdomen, where the abdomen distends gradually. While exhaling, retract the lower abdomen gradually and imagine Qi exiting the body through the same route. In the meanwhile, lift both hands to the chest with the dorsum of the hands facing each other, move both hands apart

by drawing an arch along the side of the body until they reach the lateral sides of the thighs, and then move the hands to their original places along the same route. Repeat these movements 21 times. Pay attention here to breathing in and out through the nose. Listen to the snoring (ocean) sound as air is entering the nose while inhaling and then release the air out through the nose and coordinate the movement of the hands with the breath.

4. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary practice, articulate the HE sound audibly, 30 times.

B. Deficiency of Yang Qi

Clinical manifestations: Dull chest pain, or stuffing chest with shortness of breath, dizziness, palpitations, fatigue, and lassitude, aversion to cold with cold hands and feet, pale complexion, sweating during physical activities, pale and swollen tongue with teeth marks on the sides, and deep and thready pulse or knotted pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Qigong for CAD, Strengthening Qigong and Relaxation Qigong as the primary forms, and Relaxing Quiescent Qigong, Health Preserving Qigong, and Roborant Qigong as supplementary practices.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. For those who use Qigong for CAD as the primary form, practice two times daily, 30–60 minutes each time, in the morning and evening consistently for 100 days.
2. For those who select Roborant Qigong as a supplementary form, follow the practice instruction of Roborant Qigong in Chapter 6.
3. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, tapping the teeth, stirring the tongue, gargling with saliva, and swallowing the saliva are used to end the practice.
4. Practice the above methods 1–2 times a day, with six months as one treatment course.

III. Cautions

1. Patients suffering from angina pectoris and/or arrhythmia may expect remission of the symptoms. For more severe cases with MI or heart failure, other emergency medical treatments are needed as soon as possible. Do not rely on Qigong therapy alone, as this can delay or worsen the conditions. Typically it is not suggested to practice Qigong while having an acute MI; however, Relaxation Qigong may be applied mildly if the patient has become quite familiar with it before suffering from the heart attack.
2. Patients with CAD should quit smoking and limit the use of alcohol. Eat high carbohydrate foods such as beans or bean products, adn fresh fruits and vegetables. Avoid foods with high fat and sugar.
3. Avoid sudden emotional stimulation. Keep a positive attitude and a balanced emotional state.
4. Practice Qigong consistently. Maintain ordinary daily routines. Cultivate a good lifestyle. Avoid the cold and keep warm, eat moderately, and balance work with rest.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for CAD can be found amongst the Qigong forms for "Xiong Bi (胸痹) or chest Bi syndrome" and "chest pain" in ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classic documentation are as follows.

A. "Method of Nourishing Heart" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* or *Zun Sheng Ba Jian* (遵生八笺)

"In the days of the beginning of fourth and fifth months of the lunar year, sit with legs crossed facing the south in the morning, tap the teeth nine times and gargle with saliva three times. Remain quiet and focus the mind inwardly. Imagine inhaling red Qi (Qi of the sun in the east), the Qi of LI (a phase of the Eight Trigrams representing fire) and swallow it three times. Then hold breathing for 30 breathings to compensate for Qi loss caused by articulating the HE sound."

Method of Treating Heart with Six Qi says, "Treat Heart disease by articulating the HE sound during exhalation. Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth; articulate HE silently during exhalation. Repeat the practice three times. While articulating HE, cross the arms above the head to eliminate heat from the heart and relieve irritability. Some say to cease the practice when the symptoms are relieved as excessive practice can bring about damage. Others feel strongly that the healing sounds are restorative at all times. Some suggest exhaling silently with the HU sound after prolonged inhalation to compensate for Qi loss caused by frequent articulation of the HE sound."

Heart Daoyin Practice or *Xin Zang Dao Yin Fa* (心脏导引法) says, "Sit with the legs either crossed, or not crossed; clench the hands into fists. Move the left fist against the right forcefully, and vice versa. Repeat five to six times on each side. Then raise one hand up as if holding the heaven, imagining holding 50 kg of rice. Repeat with left and right hand alternately. Cross the fingers and put them under the feet with body bent and without breathing five or six times. Thus the Wind evils in the chest and heart may be eliminated. Finally, close the eyes; swallow the saliva three times and tap the teeth three times to finish the practice."

Note: *Plain Questions* says "trouble in the upper body may be treated by using the dispersing method above the torso." Therefore all dynamic Daoyin exercises follow this principle to treat chest Bi syndrome since it is the disease located in the upper Jiao; either conduct Qi upwards or ascend the evil Qi to the upper Jiao with certain body movements and then conduct the genuine Qi to dispel the evil Qi. When practicing the Six Syllable Formula in exhalation, it is not especially necessary to be limited by the numbers of exhalations indicated in the ancient classics. Beginners, in particular, should use exhaling naturally and comfortably according to each individual condition. And conducting inward reflection should be relaxed rather than with heavy intention, otherwise adverse reactions may occur. Remember to do closing movements at the end of the exercise.

B. "The 5th Method of Regulating Qi" from *Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies* or *Qian Jin Yao Fang* (千金要方)

"Patients with heart Zang diseases should articulate the HU or CHUI sound during exhalation. The sound HU treats cold syndrome, while CHUI treats heat syndrome. Articulate HU strongly 30 times and then gently ten times; articulate CHUI strongly 50 times and then gently ten times. Patients with kidney Zang diseases usually manifest with a cold body, and dark and lusterless complexion due to Yin deficiency. Treat this with the SI sound during exhalation."

Note: It is not uncommon to find a discrepancy in the correspondence between sounds and internal Zang organs in different ancient works. The sounds used here (in *The Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies*) differ from those in *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life.* Practitioners may compare one with the other and experience the differences in order to choose the suitable one for them in practice.

C. "The Method of Gupling Qi at Three Potions" from *Seven Tablets from the Cloudy Satchel* or *Yun Ji Qi Qian* (云笈七签)

"Anyone who would like to enjoy a long life must know three places in the body very well. The upper one is the muddy pill—upper Dantian. The middle one is purple-red palace—middle Dantian. The lower one is the lower elixir-field where the spark of life dwells—lower Dantian). In one day, the Qi naturally generates from midnight to midday (night's rest and early morning) and it naturally depreciates from midday till midnight (the work day and the evening). While the Qi is generating, take a lying posture, close the eyes, make fists, and close the mouth without breathing, counting from 1 to 200, then exhale slowly and gently from the mouth. Gradually increase the duration of breath holding… The holding breath method involves inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth in a slight and subtle manner while the full number is counted. Repeat the exercise of inhaling and exhaling continuously. Thus the duration of holding breathing could be

prolonged for a count of 500 or even 1000. In this practice, Qi can enter the body just through the nose and spread to the four extremities. This delays the exhalation. Breathe out through the mouth as needed."

Note: Because the main TCM pathogenesis of chest Bi syndrome is the deficiency of Yang with a relative excess of Yin, exercises with effects of reinforcing Yang such as the Method of Absorbing Qi at Three Potions should be applied. The key point of the exercise is holding the breath. Other exercises with the effect of nourishing the heart could also be considered, including the "Method of Eating Lights of Sun and Moon" described in the Appendix to Section 6. In addition, one may refer to some other forms, such as Inner Nourishing Qigong, Strengthening Qigong, Small Circulation Qigong, and Absorbing Essence of Sun and Moon. For detailed information, please refer to relevant chapters in this textbook or to the classical works, such as *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* or *Zun Sheng Ba Jian* (遵生八笺) and *Seven Tablets from the Cloudy Satchel* or *Yun Ji Qi Qian* (云笈七签).

3. Peptic Ulcers

The formation and development of peptic ulcers are closely related to the erosion of the mucosal membrane in areas of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract exposed to acid and pepsin—thus occurrences are named "peptic ulcers." Peptic ulcers are also termed "gastric or duodenal ulcers" because they most commonly occur (over 95%) in the stomach and the duodenum. Peptic ulcers clinically manifest as a chronic disease, and 80 percent of ulcers are associated with an infection of a spiral-shaped bacterium, *Helicobacter pylori*. A rhythmic, dull, achy upper abdominal pain and poor digestion which occur chronically and periodically are the primary features. Peptic ulcer is a common disease; about 10–12 percent of the population suffer from gastric or duodenal ulcers in their lifetime. Peptic ulcers occur in any age group, but more commonly among those between the ages of 20 and 50. Men are more likely to develop peptic ulcers than women—the ratio is 1.4–8:1. Severe complications such as upper GI tract bleeding, perforation, pyloric obstruction, and cancer are possible added complications.

According to the clinical features, peptic ulcers can be categorized into TCM diagnoses of stomach pain, heart pain, and abdominal pain. Acid regurgitation, borborygmi, and belching are also related to peptic ulcers. TCM holds that the disease is caused by stagnation of Qi and undernourishment of the stomach due to external-pathogenic factors, improper diet, emotional stress, and dysfunction of the Zang-Fu organs. The major clinical manifestation is stomach pain, which may be distending, prickling, mild and dull, stirring, or burning, accompanied by poor appetite, nausea, belching, acid regurgitation, borborygmi, abnormal defecation, etc.

The first step in TCM pattern differentiation for treating stomach pain is to distinguish the excess from deficiency. Three typical patterns are introduced here, which requires a combination of Qigong treatment by differentiating symptoms and treatment by differentiating diseases. For excess symptoms, Qigong treatment needs to reduce the excess, with dynamic Qigong as the main form in combination with static Qigong; for deficient symptoms, tonifying the stomach with static or tranquility methods is needed, in which warming Yang for Yang deficiency and nourishing Yin for Yin inadequacy are aspects.

The following Qigong forms can also be the Qigong therapy for chronic gastritis selected according to symptom differentiation.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Internal Nourishing Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

B. Relaxation Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. The Six Syllable Formula

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

A. Liver Qi Over-Acting on the Stomach

Clinical manifestations: Gastric pain radiating to both flank regions, tendency to sight deeply, and flatulence and frequent belching, which are alleviated by belching and passing out gas intestinally. These symptoms can be aggravated by emotional stress, excessive worries, and anger. In addition symptoms may include irregular defecation, thin and white coating on the tongue, and wiry pulse. The treatment principle is soothing the liver, regulating Qi, pacifying the stomach, and sedating pain.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Relaxation Qigong, the Six Syllable Formula, and Internal Nourishing Qigong as the primary practices, combined with Standing Stake and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. *Key Points for Practice*

1. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as the primary form, take a posture lying on the right side, sitting posture, or relaxed standing posture depending on the physical strength or illness condition. Start natural breathing first and change to the "pause-breath" method gradually with the combination of soft and hard breathing practices. The key points for differentiations are: when experiencing the pain or severe pain, apply the "Zhongwan (CV-12) open-descending" hard breathing method, which is the "inhale-pause-exhale" method; keep the mind on the Zhongwan area, imagining it opening up from inside out while inhaling, pause the breathing for a while, and then imagine the Qi descending from Zhongwan to the soles of the feet in order to regulate the Qi and alleviate the pain. When the pain is reduced, but other signs and symptoms such as chest oppression and stomach fullness, poor appetite and digestion, and irregular bowel movement become primary, apply the "Zhongwan open-descending" soft breathing method, which is the "inhale-exhale-pause" method: imagine the Zhongwan area opening up while inhaling, imagine the Qi descending from Zhongwan to the feet, and then pause the breathing for a while to strengthen the spleen, harmonize the stomach, unblock the obstruction, and soothe the chest and abdomen. After practicing this form for 30–40 minutes, keep the mind on the Dantian, the lower elixir field, for 5–10 minutes, and change the breathing method to natural breathing to nourish the Qi quietly. The time of practice can be shorter for beginners, and increased gradually.
2. For those who select Relaxation Qigong as the primary form, take a natural standing or sitting posture. Gradually replace natural breathing with abdominal breathing. Apply the Tri-Line Relaxation Sequence or Localized Relaxation Qigong as the main form to regulate Qi and sedate pain. The duration of practice can be 10–20 minutes. One may also take Holistic Relaxation Qigong as the preparatory posture for Internal Nourishing Qigong and practice it for 5–10 minutes.
3. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as the primary form, take a standing posture; articulate the XU, HU, and XI sounds to soothe the liver, regulate Qi, pacify the stomach, and relieve pain. Articulate each sound 12 times. Practicing this form can also be combined with the dynamic and static forms of Internal Nourishing Qigong.
4. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, besides the primary form, practice tapping the teeth, stirring

the tongue, gargling with saliva, combing the hair, rubbing the face, rubbing the hypochondriac areas, and kneading the lower elixir field clockwise from Health Preserving Qigong alone in proper time. It can also be the form for preparatory or closing movements.

5. For those who select Standing Stake as a supplementary form, besides the primary form, practice the holding ball posture, abdominal breathing, and focusing the mind on the lower elixir field for 30–40 minutes in the morning and evening respectively.

B. Spleen Zang and Stomach Fu Deficiency and Cold

Clinical manifestations: Constant dull pain in stomach, preference for warmth and pressure (aggravated by empty stomach or by cold or physical exertion, and alleviated after taking meals), vomiting clear fluid, poor appetite, lassitude and fatigue, cold limbs, loose or soft stool, pale tongue with white coating, and feeble and weak pulse. The treatment principle is warming the middle Jiao and dispersing the cold, pacifying the stomach, and alleviating pain.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Internal Nourishing Qigong as the main form. Combine with Relaxation Qigong and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as the primary form, take a supine position, lateral recumbent position on the right side, or sitting position; adopt the "Zhongwan gathering-spreading" hard breathing method, which is "inhale-pause-exhale" breathing: keep the mind on Zhongwan, imagining the Qi gathering toward Zhongwan to target the source of the disease while inhaling, pause the breathing for a while, and then imagine the Qi spreading out from Zhongwan to achieve the effect of warming the middle, dispersing the cold, harmonizing the stomach, and alleviating the pain. Practice for 30–40 minutes, and then keep the mind on the elixir field for 5–10 minutes to nourish the Qi.
2. For those who select Relaxation Qigong as a supplementary form, besides practicing the primary form every day, take the supine position; gradually replace natural breathing with abdominal breathing. Apply Holistic Relaxation Qigong for 5–10 minutes as the preparatory posture for Internal Nourishing Qigong.

3. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, apply tapping the teeth, stirring the tongue, and gargling with saliva, combining the hard breathing method of conducting "Zhongwan pressing" 18 times as the preparatory posture—using both middle fingers with the help of the index and ring fingers, pressing the Zhongwan point while inhaling, pausing the breathing, and releasing the fingers while exhaling to warm the middle Jiao, tonify the Qi, and eliminate the pain. Then apply kneading the elixir field clockwise and counterclockwise 36 times for each direction, and rubbing the waist 36 times, as the closing movements. Practice for 30–60 minutes per session, 2–3 times a day.

C. Stomach Heat due to Yin Deficiency

Clinical manifestations: Indistinct burning stomachache, hungry but no desire to eat, belching with fetid odor, acid regurgitation, gastric upset, dry mouth and throat, heat sensation in palms, soles, and heart region, emaciation, lassitude, dry stool, dry and red tongue, and thready and rapid pulse. The treatment principle is nourishing stomach Yin, pacifying the middle Jiao, and alleviating pain.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Internal Nourishing Qigong as the main form; combine with Relaxation Qigong and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as the main form, apply the soft breathing method of "inhale-exhale-pause" as the main breathing method for practice based on the characteristics of the stomach pain (which are: prolonged stomach pain generates the heat, the empty heat disturbs the middle Jiao, accumulated heat consumes extra Yin, and deficient Yin is unable to nourish the stomach) in order to reduce the heat, replenish the Yin, and nourish the stomach. According to the treatment principles of TCM and Qigong therapy, which aim to treat the manifestations when they are acute, and treat the cause of the disease when it is chronic, apply the hard breathing method, combining articulating the "HU" sound while exhaling to treat burning stomach pain and acid reflux; inhale slowly and exhale quickly, keep the mind on the Zhongwan area in order to reduce the empty heat, harmonize the middle Jiao, and eliminate the pain. When the pain subsides, practice

with the soft breathing method. Combine with tongue "up and down" movements to treat the symptoms of dry mouth and throat and of red tongue with less coating and less moisture: raise the tongue up against the upper palate while inhaling and lower the tongue against the lower palate while exhaling; keep the tongue against the upper palate without moving when pausing the breathing after inhaling, and keep the tongue against the lower palate without moving when pausing the breathing after exhaling. This practice has the effect of nourishing the Yin, harmonizing the middle Jiao, moistening the dryness, and generating the essence.

2. For those who select Relaxation Qigong as a supplementary form, this form can be used as preparatory movements for the main form.
3. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, practice tapping the teeth, stirring the tongue, gargling with saliva, swallowing the saliva, rubbing the abdomen, and tapping the Zusanli point (ST-36) with the hands as either the preparatory or closing movements for the main form.

III. Cautions

1. It is crucial for patients with stomach syndromes to be less emotional, have a good mood, be open-minded, and keep a good balance between work and rest.
2. Follow the principle of frequent meals with small portions and take food that is easy to digest with no strong flavor. Avoid irregular diet; do not eat or drink too much at one time; and do not take foods that may irritate, or drugs that upset the stomach.
3. Do not practice while hungry. Eat some food, and then start practice when the sensation of hunger has subsided.
4. Practice persistently. The frequency and duration of each form may be reduced as the pain is alleviated. However, do not disrupt the practice; this ensures that the treatment effect can be reinforced.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for peptic ulcers can be referenced in the Qigong forms for "Weiwan Tong" (胃脘痛) or stomach pain in ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classic documentation are as follows.

A. "Diseases of Five-Zang and Six-Fu Organs" from the 15th volume of *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun* (诸病源候论)

"*Daoyin Recipes for Nurturing Life* says 'Patients with diseases of Spleen Zang always feel the Wind blowing on the surface of the body with pain and itchiness; to release their body aches and discomfort, they exhale with the XI sound.'"

Note: The spleen Zang and the stomach Fu are a pair of Zang Fu organs in TCM theory. Regulating spleen Zang can in turn help with the stomach Fu.

"The 5th Method of Regulating Qi" from *Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies* says "exhale with the XI sound to treat spleen Zang disease."

Records Concerning Tending Mind and Prolonging Life or *Yang Xing Yan Ming Lu* (养性延命录) points out "There is one way to breathe in and six ways to breathe out. The six ways involve the articulation of these syllables: CHUI, HU, XI, HE, XU, and SI… Exhale with the HU sound to dispel the Wind, with XI to relieve restlessness…with XU to remove stagnation and with SI for relief the extreme weakness."

"Distending the Abdomen to Refine Qi" or "Gu Fu Tao Qi" (鼓腹淘气) from *Daoyin for Immortality I* in *General Collection for Holy Relief* says, "Exhale with the six sounds moderately to avoid damaging the vital Qi."

Note: The two sounds XI (嘻) and XI (唏) in the above-mentioned two books have the same pronunciation and similar applications for spleen Zang excess condition. *Records Concerning Tending Mind and Prolonging Life* points out that the Six Syllable Formula is a reducing method, thus it should be stopped when the diseases were controlled. Others feel that use of the Six Syllable Formula with quiet expression has the benefit of stimulating or tonifying function and may have a positive influence as a wellness practice which is continued over time. In modern Qigong therapeutics, the exercise of exhaling with the XU sound combined with HU is commonly applied for stomachache due to liver Qi over-acting on the stomach Fu with accumulated heat in liver and stomach along with Qi and blood stagnation.

B. *Essential Golden Prescriptions for Emergencies* or *Qian Jin Yao Fang* (千金要方)

"If you walk one hundred steps after a meal, knead the abdomen a hundred times, and tap the teeth 36 times to produce plentiful saliva, the digestion will be improved and diseases will never attack you."

"Kneading the Life Gate or Xia Mo Sheng Men" (下摩生门) from *Daoyin for Immortality I* in *General Collection for Holy Relief* or *Sheng Ji Zong Lu* (圣济总录) says "The life gate is no other than the navel. Distend the abdomen and knead the navel while holding breath for one circulation."

"Moving the Water and Earth" or "Yun Dong Shui Tu" (运动水土) from *Daoyin for Immortality I* in *General Collection for Holy Relief* suggests "walk after meals; rub the ribs on both sides and then the lower back with both palms till very hot. Health preservers named this practice Moving the water and earth. Water corresponds to the kidney and earth to the spleen. Thus the food is digested properly, the blood circulates in the vessels smoothly, and five Zang organs are harmonized."

Note: These Qigong forms refer to "tapping the teeth," "swallowing the saliva," and "kneading the abdomen" by medical practitioners of later generations. They are easy to

learn, safe and effective, and are still commonly applied for prevention and treatment of spleen and stomach diseases.

C. "Syndromes of Spleen-stomach Diseases" or "Pi Wei Bing Zhu Hou" (脾胃病诸候) from the 21st volume of *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* or *Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun*

Daoyin Movements for Health Preservation says 'bend the body to one side, extend both arms to the same side. Rapidly bend the body and relax the head and neck and forcibly extend both hands outwards as if reaching for something to regulate the whole body into a harmonious state gradually. Do the exercises 21 times each side, to the left and then to the right side. Place one hand in front and another at the back of the neck with the palms facing outside as if pulling something out, relax the body and mind, oscillate the body 21 times, and then exchange the position of the hands, do the same exercise to remove the discomfort from the back and arms and to harmonize the spleen and stomach."

Note: The two exercises described above are a combination of loose and tight, stretching and relaxing, rapid motion followed by slow motion, reducing combined with reinforcing, and dynamic exercise combined with static exercise. These are exactly what is needed to treat poor appetite and other digestive symptoms that are mixed with deficiency and excess due to dysfunction of spleen and stomach. Patients who are physically capable may select dynamic Qigong to promote Qi circulation and harmonize the spleen and stomach.

D. "Syndromes of Indigestion" from the 21st volume of *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases*

"Sit with legs crossed and stretch the back. Raise the right hand with the palm facing upward; put the left hand on the left costal area. Take seven deep breaths through the nose. This exercise helps dispel cold in the stomach and improve poor digestion." In the same volume it also says "Moving Qi as a wild goose, squat down, lower both arms to hold the left knee as if fixing the left side with a rope; lower the head and lean against the arm. Hold the breath and keep the mind on the areas with obstructions. Repeat 12 times. While promoting digestion this has the added effect of, nourishing the spirit, and strengthening the body. Therefore all diseases may be cured and evil Qi is unable to attack the body."

Note: These exercises, the second one in particular, resemble Hua Tuo's Five-Animal Play by imitating the movement and living habits of the animals. Both exercises combine breathing with body movements. They are effective for smoothing Qi circulation, promoting digestion and harmonizing the spleen and stomach. This can relieve or reduce all symptoms of indigestion and stomach ulcer due to deficiency induced by coldness.

E. "Daoyin-Massage" from *Daoyin for Immortality I* in *General Collection for Holy Relief*

"Sit straight and cross both hands under the occiput; extend the neck and the head and look upward. Move the head up and down, left and right, exerting force with hands to against the neck. Pull the tips of toe with hands; hold the breath; keep the mind on Taichong (LR-3). Take the position of drawing a bow on the left side, and then the right side. Extend both arms and move the body as well as all joints in all directions to promote digestion and circulate blood. Repeat each movement three times."

Note: The main contents of ancient books on Qigong and massage methods for health preservation are collected and reorganized in *General Collection for Holy Relief*, forming a complete *Daoyin for Immortality*. The first volume consists of 14 dynamic forms, among which Daoyin and Massage are more complicated than Distending the Abdomen to Refine Qi, Kneading the Life Gate, and Moving the Water and Earth. It has the effects of clearing channels and collaterals, promoting circulation of Qi, soothing liver Zang and relieving stagnation. Thus it is especially good for stomach pain due to excess conditions—liver over-acting on the stomach, accumulated heat in liver and stomach, or stagnation of liver Qi, etc.

F. "Method of Regulating Spleen" or "Dao Yin Pi Zang Fa" (导引脾脏法) from *Nursing Life According to Seasons* or *Si Shi Tiao She Jian* (四时调摄笺) in *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life*

"While sitting extend one leg straight and pull the tips of toe with both hands for 3 to 5 times. Then sit on the heels with both hands against the ground; open the eyes widely and look backward. Repeat the movements 3–5 times on the left and right sides respectively. This method can treat the diseases of the spleen Zang and promote digestion."

Note: The two methods belong to dynamic Qigong with the effects of promoting circulation of Qi and appetite. Ancient TCM physicians followed the principle of "reinforcing by unblocking" in treating diseases of the spleen Zang and stomach Fu. These methods are helpful to strengthen the spleen Zang and stomach Fu to promote digestion for both deficiency and excess conditions. Attention should be paid to the selection of treatment methods according to TCM syndrome pattern differentiation and the integration of dynamic and static Qigong during the practice.

Peptic ulcers and chronic gastritis are similar in symptoms and TCM pattern differentiation. Therefore, ancient Qigong therapies for chronic gastritis can be supplement for treating peptic ulcers.

4. Chronic Liver Diseases

Chronic liver diseases are most often seen as chronic hepatitis and cirrhosis. The former is characterized by chronic inflammation of the liver, which will have often lasted more than one half to one year. There are two types of chronic hepatitis: chronic persistent hepatitis and chronic active hepatitis. The common signs and symptoms of chronic hepatitis are fatigue, right subcostal area discomfort or dull pain, poor appetite, abdominal distension, low-grade fever, dizziness, insomnia, yellow urination, etc. Some patients may have symptoms of palpitations, shortness of breath, fullness in chest, etc. Patients with chronic persistent hepatitis typically have mild conditions. Relatively severe conditions appear with active hepatitis.

Besides the above-mentioned signs, additional symptoms may include vascula spiders, palmar erythema, subcutaneous bleeding spots, hyperpigmentation, progressive jaundice, or hepatomegaly. Pressure pain and percussion pain at

the liver area are also among the clinical features of chronic active hepatitis. In liver function tests, remarkable aminotransferase elevations are seen in chronic active hepatitis with variable elevated bilirubin, alkaline phosphatase, ALT, AST, plasma cell infiltrates, and immune globulin, and is Auto-Abs positive in many cases. Slight or moderately raised aminotransferase, ALT, and AST are seen for chronic persistent hepatitis; while plasma cell infiltrates and immune globulin close to normal can be found with negative Auto-Abs.

An accumulation of fibrous tissue (fibrosis) and regenerative nodules in the liver can lead to cirrhosis. Many patients with cirrhosis are asymptomatic in the initial stage; others present with abdominal distension, decreased appetite, discomfort and pain in the liver area, progressive emaciation, fatigue, etc. In the later stage, cirrhosis is usually marked by decreased liver function, portal hypertension, and dysfunction of the endocrine system. Less formation of albumin occurs due to portal hypertension and decreased liver function, which further leads to low serum osmotic pressure and deactivation of aldosterone, estrogen, and ADH. Eventually lymph fluid exudations from the liver and fluid retention in the abdominal cavity result in ascites. Cirrhosis also disturbs the function of coagulation because of the absence of certain clotting factors.

In TCM disorders, chronic liver diseases can be categorized into "Abdominal Distension," "Simple Abdominal Distension," "Accumulation and Aggregation," "Abdominal Mass," "Jaundice," "Flank Pain," etc. The disease originates in the liver and further affects the spleen and kidneys. It results from Qi stagnation, blood stasis, and fluid accumulation. Prolonged liver Qi stagnation leads to Wood (liver) over-acting on Earth (spleen), resulting in the failure of the spleen functions of transportation and transformation. Thus, accumulated fluid obstructs the smooth flow of the Qi, and accumulated dampness can generate heat, resulting in a damp-heat condition. Dysfunction of the liver and spleen causes Qi stagnation and blood stasis with associated signs and symptoms. Dysfunction of the spleen causes failure of the clear Yang to ascend, failure to descend the turbid Yin, and failure in nourishing the other organs and the body by essence from food and water processed by the spleen. When untreated conditions from the dysfunctional liver and spleen last for a long time, liver, spleen, and then kidneys all become deficient and the clinical presentation of liver and kidney Yin deficiency can be seen. In summary, the disharmony and dysfunction of the liver, spleen, and kidneys cause stagnation of Qi, stasis of blood, and accumulation of fluid in the abdomen. Regarding the pathogenesis, this disease is a typical condition with coexistence of deficiency of the liver, spleen, and kidney Zang organs, and excess of Qi, blood, and dampness due to accumulation and stagnation.

The features of the etiology and pathogenesis of chronic liver diseases are: deficiency of the internal organs with excess external manifestations, and

deficiency and excess conditions tangled together. Since the excess condition is dominant in the early stage of the disease, Qigong therapy mainly aims to regulate Qi, relieve distension, invigorate blood flow, dissolve the stasis, and clear the damp-heat. The principle of Qigong therapy for the middle and later stages of the disease is to purge the excess and to tonify the deficiency at the same time; purging the water to reduce the distension for the middle stage and tonifying the deficiency for the later stage; and treating the complications.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Soothing the Liver Qigong

1. Preparatory Posture

Sit on a chair of proper height so that the thighs are parallel, the calves vertical to the ground, and the feet flat on the ground, slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Put the right palm over the lower elixir field, with the left palm over the dorsum of the right hand. Press the tongue against the upper palate; relax the body thoroughly.

2. Abdominal Breathing

Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Press the tongue against the upper palate while inhaling, but against the lower palate while exhaling. Commence abdominal breathing. Inhale naturally and apply mind-intention to conduct Qi down to the lower elixir field during the exhalation. Articulate the XU sound, but silently, while inhaling and exhaling. Make the breathing cycle harmonious, thin, and long. Repeat 12 times.

3. Opening and Closing with Both Hands

While inhaling, raise both hands to the level of the navel in front of the elixir field, with palms facing each other and fingertips pointing down. This is called closing. While exhaling, turn the palms outward so that both hands are close to each other but tend to pull away from each other, and then separate them to the lateral sides. This is termed opening. Apply the same mind-intention while breathing as above; articulate the XU syllable silently while exhaling. Repeat 12 times.

4. Walking Sequence

Step forward with the left foot with the heel on the ground, leg straight and toes facing upward. Extend both arms forward and form a holding ball posture, with the tongue against the upper palate. Inhale and conduct Qi upward

from the big toe of the left foot or Yinbai (SP-1) along the spleen meridian, passing the inner thigh to the abdomen (connecting the spleen and stomach), through the diaphragm until it enters the heart. Qi is conducted flowing along the meridian with mind-intention; the hands also move along the meridian following the mind—thus the mind, Qi, and the body are integrated with one intent. While moving the hands, the wrists and ten fingers flex slightly and naturally as if to bring the Qi to the lungs, passing by the throat till it reaches the root of the tongue and spreads over the lower surface of the tongue. Raise both hands and conduct Qi upward to the level of the lips. Then exhale, change the position of both hands, and put the palms over the area of the right upper chest with the left hand on top of the right. Massage with both palms from the right upper chest down through the liver area (at the same time, withdraw the left foot and step forward with the right one, with the heel on the ground and toes pointing up). Articulate the XU syllable silently while exhaling, imagining the Qi descending along the liver meridian to Dadun (LR-1). At the end of exhalation, withdraw the right foot and step out with the left foot again. Repeat the same process 3–9 times.

5. Softening the Liver

1. Softening the liver with both fists: Clench hands into fists with the thumb in the center of the fist. Put the left fist on Qimen (LR-14) and the right one on Zhangmen (LR-13).
2. Softening the liver with palms: Put the left palm on Qimen (LR-14) and the right on Zhangmen (LR-13).

Vibrate the fists and palms following the lead of the wrists' vibration at a frequency of about 100–200 times per minute for 2–3 minutes.

6. Imagination and Observation

1. For patients with excess conditions (e.g. liver Qi stagnation, or blood stasis obstructing the meridians): While inhaling, imagine blue-green Qi (the blue color of the sky in the fall or the green color of the bamboo), through Qimen (LR-14), entering into the liver continuously. While exhaling, imagine green-brown Qi from the liver exiting out of the body through Zhangmen (LR-13).
2. For patients with deficiency conditions (e.g. very weak patients with prolonged diseases, tinnitus, dizziness, withered nails, and tender red tongue with little coating): While inhaling, perform the same mind-intention and Qi-conducting form as that for excess conditions. While

exhaling, imagine black Qi (dark and black color like dust) exiting out of the body from Zhangmen (LR-13) continuously.

The duration of imagination and observation is 5–10 minutes.

7. Moving Qi Upward and Downward with Massage

While inhaling, change both fists into palms, raise them slowly past the breasts, and then press them against the areas on top of the breasts with the fingertips of each hand pointing to each other. While exhaling, articulate the XI syllable silently and lower the hands downward to the level of the lower elixir field, and imagine Qi descending from the chest through the three Jiao like a waterfall. Repeat nine times.

8. Closing Movements

Resume the preparatory posture. Press the tongue against the lower palate; open the eyes; and stop briefly. Move the head up and down three times. Rotate the neck from left to right and then from right to left twice. Swing both arms to the left and right six times naturally. While the arms swing to the level of the chest, turn the head, body, and eyes following the lead of the arm movements, press the upper chest with both palms, and then knead the region from chest to lower abdomen 3–9 times.

B. Health Preserving Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Relaxation Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6 or only apply the form in the liver area.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

With complicated signs and symptoms, chronic liver diseases can be differentiated into more syndromes clinically. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major syndromes: stagnation of liver Qi and deficiency of liver and kidney Yin.

A. Stagnation of Liver Qi

Clinical manifestations: Flank pain, abdominal distension, belching, lassitude, poor appetite, bitter taste in the mouth, dry throat, thin and white tongue coating, and wiry pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Soothing the Liver Qigong or Relaxation Qigong as the primary form and combine with the Six Syllable Formula, Stake Standing, Internal Nourishing Qigong, and Eight Pieces of Brocade.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. For those who select Soothing the Liver Qigong as the primary form, take the standing posture; integrate the body, breathing, and the mind into one; regulate and smoothen the inhalation and exhalation; and coordinate the mind focusing with the imagination. Practice twice a day in the morning and in the evening, 30 minutes for each session.
2. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, apply the XU sound, exhale longer and inhale shorter, coordinate the Qi with the mind, and imagine the XU sound is breathing out from the liver. Practice it three times a day.
3. For those who select the Eight Pieces of Brocade as a supplementary form, mainly practice three sections of the Eight Pieces of Brocade—"Holding the Heaven with Two Hands to Regulate the Three Jiao," "Drawing the Bow and Shooting the Serpent Left Then Right," and "Clenching Fist and Gazing with Eyes Widely Open to Increase Power and Qi"; practice them 5–6 times a day.
4. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as a supplementary form, take either the lying or sitting posture, coordinated with the breathing method of "inhale-exhale-pause," and keep the mind on the lower elixir field. Practice this four times a day for 30–60 minutes each session. Massaging the abdomen and gargling with saliva from Health Preserving Qigong can be applied as well.

B. Deficiency of Liver and Kidney Yin

Clinical manifestations: Dizziness, tinnitus, aching pain of upper and lower back, dull pain in liver area, heat sensation in the palms, soles, and heart region, irritability, insomnia, red tongue with little coating, and deep and wiry pulse. In addition there may be abdominal fullness and distension, visible green vessels on the abdomen, dark complexion, purple lips, dry mouth, tidal fever, bleeding gums and nose, dark red tongue with little saliva, and thready and rapid pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Take Soothing the Liver Qigong as the main form and combine with the Six Syllable Formula, Internal Nourishing Qigong, and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. Practice Soothing the Liver Qigong as the primary form. Integrate the body, breathing, and the mind into one; regulate and smoothen the inhalation and exhalation; and coordinate the mind focusing with the imagination. Practice twice a day, in the morning and in the evening, 30 minutes for each session.
2. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, articulate the XU sound with the exhalation. Sitting posture: Keep the eyes widely open, raise the eyebrows, and turn the head slowly and horizontally to the left and right. Exhale with the XU sound when the head is turned to each side and inhale when the head is moved back in a neutral position. Standing posture: Keep the eyes wide open and raise the eyebrows. Pat the left shoulder with the right hand and exhale with XU while the head is turning to the left. Inhale while moving the head back to the neutral position. Conduct the same movements on the right side. Increase the practice time and sessions gradually and properly.
3. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, practice "Scarlet Dragon Stirring in the Ocean," kneading the abdomen, rubbing the lower back, tapping the teeth, rotating the trunk, and rubbing the soles.
4. For those who select Inner Nourishing Qigong as a supplementary form, practice the abdominal breathing form of "inhale-pause-exhale" in Internal Nourishing Qigong repeatedly, silently chant "relax and quiet" or "nourish liver and kidney," etc., and keep the mind on the liver or Guanyuan (CV-4).

III. Cautions

1. Pay attention to personal hygiene. Avoid becoming over-stressed physically or catching the common cold. Be moderate in sexual activities.
2. Keep a good mood. Release mental burdens.
3. Maintain a healthy diet; eat the foods that are easy to digest—those high in nutrition and protein (limit protein in-take for patients with hepatic

coma) and those low in fat and sugar. A low-salt diet is appropriate for patients with ascites. Foods that are irritants and hard to swallow or digest are strictly forbidden for patients with esophageal varicosity.

4. Patients with severe conditions should take medication as their primary therapy complemented with Qigong therapy.
5. Patients with chronic liver diseases have a longer duration of illness. Therefore, they should increase the time of Qigong practice gradually but persistently to obtain the greatest result.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for chronic liver diseases can be referred to the Qigong forms for "Abdominal Distention," "Simple Abdominal Distention," "Accumulation and Aggregation," "Abdominal Mass," "Jaundice," and "Flank Pain" in ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classic documentation are as follows.

A. "Key to Liver-Wood Regulation" from *Classic for Longevity* or *Shou Ren Jing* (寿人经)

"Move both hands up and down repeatedly, conducting Qi to the palms till the sense of Qi is felt at the finger tips. Then open the arms in the way of a bird spreading its wings at both sides three times. Put both hands in the front of the chest and move them up and down three times, and then move the hands to the left and to the right three times respectively."

Note: This therapy includes Daoyin and manipulating internal Qi. The up-down movements of upper limbs help Qi moving in internal organs to dredge the meridians, coordinate fire and water, and promote circulation of Ying and Wei Qi. The form has the effect of regulating Qi and blood, dredging channels and collaterals, balancing Zang Fu, and relaxing the mind.

B. "Flank Pain" from *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Disease*

"*Recipes for Nurturing Life Daoyin* movements for diseases of the left hypochondria: imagine the liver as green dragon and visualize thousands of soldiers from the east commanded by the general of the soul, with the left eye, entering into the left hypochondria to eliminate the diseases. For diseases of right hypochondria, imagine lung as white emperor and visualize thousands of soldiers commanded by the general of the soul, with the right eye, entering into the right hypochondria to eliminate the diseases."

Note: These forms combine the method of moving the body and integrating the breath and mind. Apply the movement similar to the body fitness method with special therapeutic purpose, as well as apply the special imagination of "liver as a green dragon" and "lung as a white emperor." Thus it has the effect of dredging the liver and lung meridians and to cure liver disease.

C. "Sitting Method of Nourishing Liver" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life*

"Sit and put both palms overlapped on one shoulder and twist the body slowly 3–5 times, and then do the same on the other side 3–5 times. Cross the arms and draw them towards the chest 3–5 times. Thus the obstruction, pathogenic wind and toxicity due to liver disease

can be eliminated. End the practice by pausing the breathing for a while, closing the eyes, tapping the teeth three times and swallowing the saliva in three gulps."

"Method of Nourishing the Liver" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* says "Sit, facing the east, tap the teeth three times; pause breathing for nine breaths. Inhale the green Qi of the Zhen palace into the mouth and swallow in nine gulps to reinforce the deficiency of liver."

"Method of Treating Liver with Six Qi" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* says "Treat Liver Zang disease with the XU sound. Inhale deeply through the nose and exhale through the mouth while articulating XU. Apply the articulation of XU 30 times strongly while exhaling and keep the eyes wide open in order to eliminate the liver heat and evil Qi. Articulate XU repeatedly and continuously. Decrease the practice when the disease is cured; do not overdo it. Some experts feel that the liver Qi may be negatively influenced. Others feel that gentle use of the healing sounds over time has a strengthening effect. When practicing after the disease is cured, inhalation with the XU sound can reinforce the liver and avoid liver damage."

Note: There are three treatment methods for liver disease recorded in *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life*; they are Daoyin, Imagination and Observation, and the Six Syllable Formula. The liver Zang is substantially Yin but functionally Yang and liver Qi likes to flow freely. Accordingly the Daoyin movements here tend to regulate the upper body. The closing movements involve holding the breath, closing the eyes, swallowing the saliva in three gulps and tapping the teeth for three times. These closing movements can be used for any Qigong form. Imagination and Observation practice here actually also includes the maneuver of breath adjustment which is referred to as "pausing breathing for nine breaths," meaning using the pausing breathing for the length of nine breathing cycles. For the key points of Six Syllable Formula, please refer to the relevant chapters in this book.

In addition, some other Qigong forms also have therapeutic effects for chronic liver diseases, including "Method of Reinforcing Liver Qi" in *Classic of the Yellow Yard on Five-Zang and Six-Fu Organs* or *Huang Ting Wu Zang Liu Fu Zhen Ren Yu Zhou Jing* (黄庭五脏六腑真人玉轴经), "Five Element Palm" in *Effective Approaches to a Long Life* or *Shou Shi Qing Bian* (寿世青编), and "Verses of Daoyin for Curing Diseases" in *Key to Cultivation* or *Lei Xiu Yao Jue* (类修要诀). These Qigong forms also have therapeutic effects for eye disorders because the Qi of the liver Zang opens into and influences the eyes.

5. Diabetes Mellitus

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a common endocrine disease with the key characteristic of hyperglycemia or high blood sugar. Its fundamental pathological changes are either absolute or relatively decreased secretion of insulin and decreased insulin effectiveness to target cells, resulting in metabolic disorders of sugar, protein, lipid, water, and electrolytes. The clinical manifestations of DM are polydipsia, polyuria, polyphagia, and weight loss. The early stage of diabetes can present as obesity, which will be discussed in Section 16, associated with lassitude, spiritlessness, dry and itching skin, aching pain and numbness of the

four limbs, lower back pain, etc., and positive glucose test (+ → ++++). The fasting plasma (or serum) glucose level will be over 140 mg/dl or the level of blood-glucose over 200 mg/ml at any time. Clinically, DM can be categorized into insulin-dependent DM or type I DM and non-insulin-dependent DM or type II DM. Type I DM most commonly develops at around the age of 14–15 with acute onset, severe conditions, and proneness to diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) and widely fluctuating blood-glucose level. Type II DM is usually the type diagnosed in adults over 40 years of age with slow onset and mild symptoms. A majority of type II patients are asymptomatic. In the later stages of DM, various complications can be marked, including atherosclerotic coronary disease, peripheral atherosclerotic vascular disease, diabetic nephropathy, diabetic retinopathy, and diabetic neuropathy.

DM is traditionally classified as Xiaoke (extreme thirst) in TCM. Its pathogenesis is prolonged Yin deficiency, weak constitution, deficiency of the five Zang organs caused by congenital Yin deficiency, improper diet, and self-indulgence of sweet and greasy food. In addition DM is aggravated by irregular emotions and overindulgence in sexual activities, resulting in kidney Yin deficiency and a dry heat condition in the lung and stomach. Increased duration of the disorder leads to apparent excess of impaired Yang due to genuinely deficient Yin, and further to severe deficiencies of both Yin and Yang. There are three types of Xiao in TCM. When the clinical manifestations are mainly caused by damage of Yin due to lung heat, it is called upper Xiao (polydipsia). Excessive stomach heat results in middle Xiao (polyphagia). Finally, deficiency of kidney Yin causes lower Xiao (polyuria). These three Xiaos always occur together in different degrees.

The main TCM treatment principle for DM is to nourish the Yin, generate fluid, clear the heat and moisten the dryness, and tonify Yin and Yang together; prolonged illness damages both Yin and Yang, resulting in deficiency of Yin and Yang. Qigong forms should be selected based on the disease locations, such as in the lungs, stomach, spleen, kidneys, or liver, and individual condition.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Daoyin Exercise for Diabetes

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand with the feet one shoulder-width apart and parallel to each other. Draw in the chest; straighten the back; drop the shoulders and hands naturally; and keep the neck straight and head upright as if the vertex were being pulled upward. Exclude all thoughts from the mind and apply abdominal breathing.

Gather Qi at the lower elixir field and keep the mind on the Dantian. Stand quietly for a while.

2. Interaction between Heart Zang and Kidney Zang

Raise the arms and hands upward and outward with the elbows slightly flexed and fingers of each hand pointed to each other as if holding a Taiji ball in front of the body. While inhaling, lower the arms and move the hands closer to each other till they are less than 1 cun (inch) apart in front of the lower elixir field. Then exhaling, turn the palms outwards and move them apart until the hands reach the hip area near Huantiao (GB-30). Turn the palms to face the points and cover them. Repeat the movements nine times, and then resume the preparatory posture.

3. Soothing the Liver Zang and Regulating the Lung Zang

While inhaling, raise both arms as if lifting something up; when they are up to the level of Danzhong (CV-17), put both palms together. While exhaling, extend both arms to the lateral sides of the body horizontally with palms facing outwards. And then inhaling again, lower both arms and hands down to the original position as if a wild goose is flying down to the ground. Repeat the movements nine times, and then resume the preparatory posture.

4. Strengthening the Body and Tonifying the Spleen Zang

While inhaling, turn the trunk to the left and backward and raise the right hand upward to support the heaven. Simultaneously, lift the left foot to form "Golden Cock Standing on One Leg." While exhaling, circle the right hand on top of the head, and then reach downwards to the left foot with palm facing outward. Inhale again and move the right arm and left foot back to the original position. Repeat the same movements but with the trunk turning to the right and with the left arm reaching the right foot. Repeat the movements nine times, and then resume the preparatory posture.

5. Nourishing Yin and Tonifying the Kidney

While inhaling, raise both hands from the lateral sides of the legs to the level of Danzhong (CV-17), with the arms and the wrists flexed and the palms facing upwards. While exhaling, raise both arms up to form an arc on top of the head. While inhaling again, lower both arms in front of the body. While exhaling, continue to lower the hands down and bend the trunk forward until the fingers touch the ground. Then straighten the body and move both hands, as if gathering the Qi within them, to the Dantian, the lower elixir field. Repeat the movements nine times. Resume the preparatory posture.

6. Oscillation Qigong

1. Move the left foot a step forward and shift the center of body weight forward with the toes touching the ground and the heels off the ground. While inhaling through the nose, grab the ground with the big and the second toes; oscillate both arms towards the left naturally. While exhaling, land the heels on the ground with the arms oscillating from the left side to the right side; continue to oscillate the right hand toward the right and backward and keep the left hand in front of the chest, and tilt the toes up at the same time.
2. Move the right foot a step forward with the toes touching the ground and the heels lifted off the ground. While inhaling through the nose, raise both arms in front of the chest and separate them horizontally as if a phoenix is spreading its wings. While exhaling, squat the body with palms on the knees.
3. Stand up and repeat the movements nine times. Resume the preparatory posture.
4. Closing movements: Place both hands on top of the navel (left hand underneath the right for the male, and right hand underneath the left for the female), quietly nourish the Qi, keep the mind on the lower elixir field for three minutes, and then return the hands to the sides of the body to end the practice.

B. Relaxation Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. The Six Syllable Formula

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

There are three types of Xiao in TCM: the upper Xiao, middle Xiao, and lower Xiao. Therefore, Qigong therapy is administered by the differentiations of the three Xiaos.

A. Upper Xiao

Manifestations include: Polydipsia with severe thirst, dry mouth and tongue, polyuria, red tongue tip or on the sides of the tongue with thin and yellow coating, and full and rapid pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Select Daoyin Exercise for Diabetes as the primary form in combination with the Six Syllable Formula and Five-Element Boxing.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. Practice Daoyin Exercise for Diabetes as the primary form once in the morning and once in the evening every day.
2. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, articulate the SI sound. Articulate the syllable silently without making a sound. The repeated practice time is not restricted, but should be properly assessed; less is better. Beginners should practice this more frequently but with a shorter duration for each session.
3. For those who select Five-Element Boxing as a supplementary form, practice the "pinching" method 5–10 times as one session, two sessions a day.
4. Use abdominal breathing for at least five repetitions without exertion after completing the above practice. Consciously conduct the kidney water upward to nourish the throat and tongue, and then tap the teeth and stir the tongue ten times respectively, gargle with saliva three times, and swallow it in three gulps to the lower elixir field.

B. Middle Xiao

Manifestations include: Polyphagia with frequent hunger and thirst, polyuria, emaciation, dry stools, yellow coating on the tongue, and slippery and forceful pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Select Daoyin Exercise for Diabetes as the primary form and combine with Internal Nourishing Qigong and the Six Syllable Formula.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. Practice Daoyin Exercise for Diabetes as the primary form once in the morning and once in the evening every day.
2. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as a supplementary form, apply the "inhale-exhale-pause" breathing method in either a sitting or lying posture; keep the mind on the lower elixir field. Repeat for 20–40 minutes for each session and do two sessions a day in the morning and in the evening.
3. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, use the HU sound. Practice six times as one session, and do two sessions a day.
4. After completing the above forms, tap the teeth and stir the tongue ten times, gargle with saliva three times and swallow it in three gulps to the lower elixir field, and then rub the abdomen 100 times to end the practice.

C. Lower Xiao

Manifestations include: Polyuria with turbid or sweet urine, soreness and weakness of the back and knees, lassitude, dizziness, tinnitus, dry lips and mouth, dry and itching skin, red tongue with little coating, and thin and rapid pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Select Daoyin Exercise for Diabetes as the main form, and combine with Roborant Qigong and the Six Syllable Formula.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. Practice Daoyin Exercise for Diabetes as the primary form once in the morning and once in the evening every day.
2. For those who select Roborant Qigong as a supplementary form, practice with subtle mind-intent and reverse abdominal breathing. Be sure to follow the proper sequence in the practice, and conduct Qi from Yongquan (KI-1) up to the lower elixir field.
3. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, use the XI and HU sounds. Practice with one word six times as one session, and do three sessions in the morning and three sessions in the evening.

4. After completing the above forms, rub the abdomen, lower back, and Yongquan (KI-1) 100 times at each location to end the practice.

III. Cautions

1. Control the diet strictly according to medical advice. Establish good life habits.
2. Drug therapy should be applied properly according to the condition of the disease during Qigong practice.
3. Keep an optimistic mood, control sexual activities, avoid overexertion, and prevent the common cold. Follow the proper sequence of Qigong practice and relaxation, be patient, and do not overpractice.
4. For secondary diabetes, take the necessary measures to treat the original disease.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

There are many Qigong forms for DM ("Xiaoke") documented in ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classic documentation are as follows.

A. "Health Preserving Daoyin" from *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* (诸病源侯论 • 养生导引法)

"Take a lying posture and loosen the clothing. Stretch the back and purposefully distend the lower abdomen. Breathe five times to conduct kidney Qi for the purpose of relieving DM and reinforcing Yin and Yang."

Note: Loosening the clothing is so that the practitioner can move without obstruction. Taking the lying posture is to clear the thoughts so that the Qi is allowed to circulate easily. Qi can be gathered in the lower abdomen by stretching the back and distending the lower abdomen. Five repetitions of the breathing are aimed at conducting kidney Qi to the throat and increasing saliva to nourish the throat and upper body, relieve DM and dryness, benefit Yin and Yang and strengthen the body and mind generally.

B. "Method of Nourishing Spleen Zang" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* (遵生八笺 • 修养脾脏法)

"In the morning of the summer days as well as the later 18 days of the other three seasons according to the lunar calendar, sit at the center of the room and pause the breathing for five breaths. Conduct Beating the Heavenly Drum; imagine inhaling yellow Qi of Kun palace (坤, a phase of the Eight Trigrams representing earth) and swallow it 12 times to reinforce damaged Qi by exhaling with the HU sound."

Note: Because diabetes is related to the lung, spleen and kidney Zang organs, patients can select any form which can regulate those three Zang organs. The Six Syllable Formula and

Eating Qi in Contemplation can be used flexibly according to the conditions of disease and the patient. The requirements for practice remain the same. Practice properly as long as the patient feels comfortable during and after the practice.

C. "Formula of Regulating Qi and Fluid" from *Prolonging Life and Eliminating Diseases* or *Yan Nian Que Bing Qian • Tiao Qi ye Jue* (延年却病笺 • 调气液诀)

"The symptoms of dry mouth, bitter taste in the mouth, little saliva, or sore throat with swallowing saliva or food are caused by excessive heat. It is necessary to open the mouth and exhale with the HE sound for 10–20 times, and then conduct Beating the Heavenly Drum. Add, if it is appropriate, the exercise of stirring the tongue to produce saliva and swallow it with 7–9 exhalations. Do this repeatedly to produce a mouthful of clear and sweet saliva which indicates the heat has been eliminated and the five Zang organs have been cooled."

D. *Essentials for Health Preservation* (保生密要)

"Daoyin movements for relieving dry mouth: Rub each sole 36 times, adjust the breath and swallow the saliva. Press the tongue against upper palate and uvula to produce a mouthful of saliva, and then swallow it slowly."

E. "Formula of Moving Qi" from *Huanzhen's Formula of Eating Innate Qi* or *Huan Zhen Xian Sheng Fu Nei Yuan Qi Jue* (幻真先生服内元气诀)

"Use the breath and mind intent to conduct congenital Qi to the upper elixir field along both sides of the vertebral column… Imagine two strips of white Qi flowing upward along the spinal cord into the brain, and cascading down through the hair, face, head, neck, arms and fingers. Also, continue Qi down to the chest, the middle elixir—pouring into five Zangs and to the lower elixir field, passing through Zusanli (ST-36), thighs, knees, calves, and ankles to Yongquan (KI-1). Imagine all turbidity, blood stasis and pathogenic factors being eliminated out of the body, from the fingers and toes, by the healthy vital Qi—the dispersing Qi. Extend the fingers and toes, let the Qi disperse through."

Note: When DM persists over a long period, it not only affects the meridians, but also the collaterals with coexisting excess and deficiency clinical manifestations. Therefore, equal attention should be paid to both reinforcing deficency and reducing excess. Quiet, internal contemplation is a primary approach in this form. The first part of this form, similar to Grand Circulation Qigong, aims at reinforcing deficiency and activating the flow of Qi. The latter part aims at reducing excess, so the hands do not need to be made into clenched fists. Actually, any form with effects of reinforcing congenital Qi recorded in classical literatures can be applied for DM. One may use *Precious Prescriptions for Emergency*, *Classic for Longevity* or *Shou Ren Jing* (寿人经), *Complete Works of Five Blessings* or *Wu Fu Quan Shu* (五福全书), or *Records Concerning Tending Mind and Prolonging Life* (养性延命录).

6. Obesity

Generally, if body weight is 10 percent over the standard height-weight tables it is considered as overweight, and as obesity if body weight is 20 percent over the standard height-weight tables. Obesity can be classified into three types, including simple obesity, secondary obesity, and other obesity. Obesity cases can be found in any age group. Adults over the age of 40 years, especially women after the menopause, have a higher prevalence of obesity. The most commonly seen obesity is simple obesity with metabolic impairment but no obvious symptoms of neurologic or endocrine disorders. Secondary obesity often results from endocrine disorders including endocrine dysfunction of the pituitary, thyroid, reproductive, and adrenal glands as well as the islets of the pancreas. Increased fatty tissue accumulation results in a 30–40 percent increased amount of oxygen consumption for obese patients over normal people. This syndrome is characterized by aversion to heat, profuse sweating, palpitations, abdominal distension, and fatigue, as well as shortness of breath due to an over-contracted diaphragm affecting both respiration and blood circulation. In addition hypoxia, retention of CO2, and somnolence in severe cases can eventually lead to hypertension, coronary artery disease, diabetes, cholelithiasis, gout, etc. Women with obesity often also have decreased menstruation and even amenorrhea and infertility. Moreover, obesity can also be associated with increased incidence of joint degeneration, lower back pain, joint pain, and even decreased immunity.

From a TCM point of view, people who are overweight usually have accumulated phlegm in the body and are prone to be deficient. In the initial stage of the disease, obesity is marked by deficiency of spleen Qi and accumulation of damp-phlegm, which gradually develops into Qi and Yang deficiency. When there is empty heat in the stomach and intestines, people tend to have big appetites, and overeat, which results in an accumulation of dampness and body fat. When there is a weak function of the spleen and the stomach, dampness and phlegm are generated internally, spreading in between the muscles and accumulating under the skin. When there is insufficiency of kidney Qi, it leads to impeded circulation of Qi, accumulation of dampness, and stagnation of phlegm, resulting in obesity.

The internal functional weakness of the body organs manifested externally as obstruction of dampness and phlegm is the pathogenesis of obesity. Therefore, the internal causes and the external manifestations should be treated at the same time; treat the internal causes by tonifying the kidney Qi and strengthening the Spleen Yang, and treat the external manifestations by clearing dampness, eliminating phlegm, and unblocking the obstruction. Most Qigong therapies

are aimed at reinforcing Yang and Qi to activate the circulation of Qi and eliminate dampness.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Weight-Losing and Body-Building Qigong

By exercising the abdominal muscles and massaging the internal organs inside the abdomen, this Qigong form promotes gastrointestinal blood circulation and improves the function of digestion and absorption. Hence, the result of weight reduction and the strengthening of the heart and lung functions can be obtained. Apply the abdominal breathing method with deep inhaling and slow exhaling; breathe naturally, integrate the breathing with mind-intention, and conduct Qi with mind focus. Practice at 5–6 am on an empty stomach to ensure the best effect. Apply an increasing number of repetitions over time and be especially careful to consider the natural variations in each patient's tolerance for the practice.

1. Abdominal Breathing

Take the supine position with palms on the chest and abdomen respectively; breathe slowly. Practice 3–5 minutes for each session. Exercise the chest muscles and intercostal muscles and the diaphragm by chest breathing or abdominal breathing.

2. Straight-Leg Raise

Take the supine position and lift both legs upwards straight, with knees extended. Breathe naturally and keep the mind on the lower elixir field to strengthen the abdominal and hip muscles. Practice 3–5 minutes for each session.

3. Sit-Up

Take the supine position and do sit-ups. Strong individuals can practice sit-ups with both elbows flexed and hands placed against the occiput, or with knees extended touching the feet with the fingers. For individuals with diminished strength it may be helpful to have someone apply external pressure at the ankles while doing sit-ups. Integrate the breathing with sitting-up movements. Keep the mind on Yongquan (KI-1) and the middle elixir field (the heart area). This exercise strengthens the abdominal muscles. Practice 3–5 minutes for each session.

4. Flexing Both Knees and Straightening the Waist

Posture and Movement: Take the supine position; flex or straighten both elbows; and place the heels close to the buttocks. Take the soles, elbows, and shoulders as supporting points, straighten the waist, tighten the anus, and retract the abdomen while inhaling; relax the abdomen while exhaling. Keep the mind on either the middle elixir field (heart area) or Mingmen (GV-4), the back elixir field (area from the middle back to the kidneys), to reinforce congenital Qi and kidney Qi to strengthen the abdominal and back muscles. Practice 3–5 minutes for each session.

5. Pressing the Abdomen

Posture and movement: Take the supine position and hold both legs with the hands to press the abdomen to strengthen the abdominal and lumbar muscles. Practice 3–5 minutes for each session.

6. Riding a Bicycle

Take the supine position, lift both feet up in the air, and support the lower back with the hands. Flex the knees and do the movements as if riding a bicycle. Coordinate the breathing with movements and keep the mind on the elixir fields to strengthen the hip muscles, abdominal muscles, and pelvic floor muscles. Practice 3–5 minutes for each session.

B. Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Roborant Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

According to the pathogenesis of obesity, TCM categorizes it into two major types: accumulation of turbid-phlegm and deficiency of spleen and kidney Qi.

A. Accumulation of Turbid-Phlegm

Manifestations include: Obesity, especially in the abdomen, heavy sensation in the limbs, fullness in the chest, dizziness, fatigue, lassitude, sleepiness, overindulgence of greasy, sweet food and alcoholic drinking, white and greasy coating on the tongue, or with a white slippery coating, and slippery pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Take Weight-Losing and Body-Building Qigong or the Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic as the primary therapeutic Qigong practices in combination with Standing Stake, Pressing Navel and Kneading Abdomen Qigong, or Weight-Losing and Body-Building Qigong.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. For those who select Weight-Losing and Body-Building Qigong as the primary form, coordinate breathing naturally and apply the abdominal breathing method with deep inhaling and slow exhaling. Pay attention to leading the Qi with the mind, and let the Qi follow the mind. The best result can be achieved by practicing the form around 5–6 am every morning with an empty stomach.
2. For those who select Pressing Navel and Kneading Abdomen Qigong as a supplementary form, pay attention to the method of conducting the form: Put the middle and index fingers of the left hand at the navel, and then cover them with the middle and index fingers of the right hand. Press and knead the navel clockwise and then counterclockwise for 100 circles respectively. The pressure should be applied gently at the beginning and increased gradually according to the tolerance of the patient. Next, knead the abdomen clockwise with both palms, with the left hand under the right first, for 72 circles, and then knead the abdomen from the navel down to the pubis and back to the navel with the left hand on top of the right in a circular motion. Push the palms against the body surface from each costal region down to the navel seven times. Pull and rub the lower abdomen with two palms from the pubis up to the navel seven times.
3. For those who select Standing Stake as a supplementary form, practice two sessions a day and 20–40 minutes for each session. The result can be achieved by consistently practicing for 1–3 months.
4. When practicing Weight-Losing and Body-Building Qigong as a supplementary form, practice in a lying posture and keep the mind on the lower abdomen or on the breathing. Distend and retract the abdomen with normal abdominal breathing 40 times. Practice 45–60 minutes for each session before the three main meals or whenever feeling hungry.

B. Deficiency of Spleen and Kidney Qi

Manifestations include: Obesity, weak and soft muscles, puffy complexion, lassitude and sleepiness, abdominal distension, loose stools, spontaneous sweating, shortness of breath that is aggravated on exertion, pale and swollen tongue with thin white coating, and deep and thin pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Take Weight-Losing and Body-Building Qigong or the Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic as the primary practice in combination with the Weight-Losing and Figure-Creating Exercise, the Exercise of Losing Lumbar Weight, the Exercise of Losing Buttock Weight, and the Exercise of Losing Leg Weight.

2. Key Points for Practice

1. For those who select Weight-Losing and Body-Building Qigong as the primary form, the key points for practice are the same as above.
2. For those who select the Weight-Losing and Figure-Creating Exercise as a supplementary form, articulate the "HAI-AI" sound while exhaling; start with HAI and end with AI. Inhale through the nose with the tip of the tongue against the upper palate and conduct the Qi to the lower abdomen; hold the breath a few seconds and then exhale. Increase the length of the breath-holding time gradually. Do the exercise in the morning and in the evening, and do not exercise after full meals.
3. For those who select the Exercise of Losing Lumbar Weight as a supplementary form, take the standing posture. The waist is the center of the axis of the head and the feet; slowly rotate the waist and hips in a small circular motion. Use normal abdominal breathing and conduct the Qi along the belt vessel. While exhaling, lower the whole body slowly and rotate the waist and hips, circulating the Qi and the blood counterclockwise along the belt vessel. While inhaling, raise the whole body slowly and rotate the waist and hips, circulating the Qi and the blood clockwise along the belt vessel.
4. For those who select the Exercise of Losing Buttock Weight as a supplementary form, take the standing posture. Use natural breathing, contract the buttock muscles, and rotate the buttocks up and down around the horizontal axis of the lower abdomen. Place both hands at the lower elixir field. Press and rotate the buttock muscles and lower the body slowly while exhaling and raise the body while inhaling.

5. For those who select the Exercise of Losing Leg Weight as a supplementary form, take the standing posture and natural breathing method. Stand on the toes and lift the heels off the ground with the knees flexed. Rotate the legs horizontally with each palm pressing on each leg or both palms pressing on the lower elixir field. Lower the body slowly while exhaling and raise the body while inhaling.

III. Cautions

1. Regulate the diet; one may reduce calorie intake by 800–1000 daily. Be sure that a proper combination of nutrients is included. Diversify the diet and ensure a proper intake of proteins, vegetables, and fruits.
2. Restrict the intake of animal fats and sugars.
3. Vary the amount of food in the three main meals—more for breakfast and less for supper.
4. Patients with severe vascular or heart diseases or digestive diseases are not advised to implement very deep breathing.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for obesity should refer to the Qigong forms for transforming dampness and dissolving phlegm, and warming the Yang and tonifying the deficiency, etc. in the ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classic documentation are as follows.

A. "Twelve Sessions of Qigong" from *Effective Approaches to a Long Life* or *Shou Shi Qing Bian* • *Twelve Pieces of Qigong* (寿世青编 • 十二段功)

In order to transform and nourish Qi and remove the phlegm-dampness accumulated in local areas, "It is the most effective to practice the form from 11 pm to 5 am, because the Qi is lucid and the abdomen is empty during this period. Drop the eyelids; sit up straight; clench both hands hold the thumbs in the fists. Sit with legs crossed and press the left heel against the root of penis in order to avoid seminal emission. Tap the teeth 30 times."

1. "Then put both palms on the neck and twist the body to the left and right side 24 times respectively" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in the flank areas).
2. "Raise both hands with fingers crossed and palms facing upwards to support the heaven and press the top of the head 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in the chest).
3. "Cover both ears with the palms, place the index fingers on top of the middle fingers and tap the occiput with both the index fingers 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors in Fengchi areas).

4. "Place one hand on top of the other. Press the left knee with both hands and twist the body toward left 24 times. Then press the right knee and twist the body toward right 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic liver wind).
5. "Place one hand forward and the other hand backward as if holding a stone bow, do this to both sides 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in arms and limbs).
6. "Sit with both hands holding the neck and twist it to the left and right side with the shoulders and arms following the hands' movement 24 times to each side" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in spleen Zang and stomach Fu)
7. "Clench both hands into fists and put them against the flank region, oscillate both shoulders 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic wind in the lumbar and flank regions).
8. "Pat the arms, upper and lower back and buttocks 14 times with both hands alternately" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in four limbs and chest).
9. "Sit with body leaning obliquely. Raise both hands as if supporting the heaven 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in the lung Zang).
10. "Sit with both knees stretched. Lower the head and reach the feet with both hands and pull the feet 12 times; and then flex the knees, put the feet on the knees, and rub the soles 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in the pericardium Fu).
11. "Place both palms on the ground and huddle the body up, raise the body upward 12 times" (to eliminate the stagnant Qi in heart and liver meridians).
12. "Stand up with hands supported on a chair or on the bed, twist the body and look backward from the left and the right 24 times on each side" (to eliminate the pathogenic wind lodged between the kidney Zang).
13. "Stand up and walk slowly with both hands clenched into fists. Step forward with the left foot with left arm swinging forward while the right arm swings backward, and then step forward with the right foot while the right arm swings forward and left arm swings backward 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in the two shoulders).
14. "Hold one hand with the other at the back of the body, bend the body and rotate it slowly to each side 24 times" (to eliminate the pathogenic factors accumulated in the costal areas).
15. "Walk more than ten steps forward and backward with crossed steps, and then sit in a chair with feet extended straight outward, rotate both feet inwards and outwards 24 times" (to eliminate pathogenic wind accumulated in the feet, knees and hips).
16. "After finishing these 15 sections, sit upright and drop the eyelids with hands clenched into fists and the mind tranquil. Press the tongue against the upper palate and then stir it in the mouth 36 times to produce saliva. Swallow it to the lower elixir field with gurgling sounds. Hold the breath for a while. Imagine the fire in

the lower elixir field burning upward through the entire body until a sensation of heat is felt all over the body."

Note: These 16 sections of Daoyin were created based on the author's family cultivation combining with the essence from Laozi's 42 sections, Brahman 12 sections, Chisongzi's (赤松子) 18 sections, Zhongli's (钟离) 8 sections and Hujiansu's (胡见素) 12 sections for five Zang organs, which regulate the body's Qi mechanism, step by step, from the head to the feet. To practice this form most effectively the practitioner may apply one or several sections or complete the whole set according to his or her clinical situation.

B. "Method of Gulping Qi of the Sun" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* (遵生八笺 • 服日气法)

"Take a sitting or standing posture in the morning and face the rising sun. Tap the teeth nine times; close the eyes and clench the thumbs into fists. Imagine colorful sunshine entering into the body, moving downward to the feet and upward to the top of the head. Conduct purple Qi from the sun and swallow it with other colorful Qi 45 times, and then gargle with the saliva and swallow it nine times."

C. "Method of Eating Lights of Sun and Moon" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* (遵生八笺 • 服日月光芒法)

"Imagine a red sun the size of a coin in the heart. Guide the shining sun upward to the throat from the heart. Let the red sun circulate in the teeth and gums, and then return to the stomach. Repeat this for a while until a clear sun is felt in the heart and stomach. Exhale Qi through the mouth and swallow the saliva 39 times. Practice three times a day—once at the sunrise, once at breakfast, and once at midday."

Note: the sun is the essence of Yang, and eating the Qi of the sun or sunlight helps reinforce Yang. Though the sun is the common object for imagination in the two forms above, they each differ in some aspects. The method of eating Qi of the sun emphasizes the mutual influence between heaven and man by selecting the day time to practice when the sun is up and leading the imagination in reality. Thus, it is more suitable for beginners. The method of eating the lights of the sun and moon has no fixed time, but requires three sessions daily for practice. It attaches importance rather to the internal experience. Therefore, the form is more difficult to practice for many. These methods tonify Yang Qi, thus obese patients with Yang deficiency and damp-phlegm accumulation can choose them to practice. In addition, cases with Yang deficiency such as coronary heart disease can apply these methods to reinforce Yang as well.

7. Menopause Syndrome

Menopause is a special transitional period of life physiologically in both males (also known as andropause) and females, though more obvious manifestations

can be found in females. Generally, it occurs at an average age of 49 for females, and at 64 for males. In response to the declined functions of the ovary and testes, the production of sexual hormones is markedly reduced in menopause syndrome. This typically results in the imbalance of the function of the hypothalamus, pituitary, and sexual glands. Irregular endocrine system function of this sort, also known as menopause syndrome, often presents as a group of symptoms associated with a dysfunctional autonomic nervous system. Menopause syndrome includes nervousness, declining memory, difficulty in mental concentration, dizziness, tinnitus, hot flushes, sweating, irritability, insomnia, lassitude, palpitations, shortness of breath, soreness and weakness of the lower back and legs, fluctuating blood pressure, swollen face and body, irregular menstruation in females, etc. The occurrence of this syndrome and the severity and the duration of the symptoms differ from person to person. The difficult symptoms may last from as little as one half year for the shortest, up to several years for the longer cases.

Menopause syndrome presents as imbalanced Yin and Yang and deficiency of Qi and blood. It has occasionally been considered as Zangzao (hysteria), with irregular menstruation, palpitations, etc. The categories of pathogenesis are deficiency of kidney Qi, empty penetrating and conception vessels, and exhaustion of Tiangui (sex-stimulating essence), which can lead to overall decline and eventually even to the failure of the reproductive function.

Menopause syndrome is predominantly a deficiency syndrome, but excess and deficiency can present at the same time as well. The treatment principles are nourishing the heart Qi, tonifying the kidney Qi, warming the Yang, and replenishing the essence in combination with soothing the liver, regulating the Qi, clearing the heart, and eliminating irritability when the excess condition exists.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Innate Yin Qigong

Innate Yin Qigong has therapeutic effects that are especially useful in pre-menopause and menopause syndrome. This form focuses on keeping the mind on Guanyuan (CV-4) or the lower elixir field in order to foster genuine Qi circulation in the kidney meridian continuously—without interruption. After a period of practice, the kidney Qi (genuine Qi) will be fostered and Shaoyin will be nourished so that the original life force will be activated; Yin and Yang, and Qi and blood, will be regulated; the meridians and the internal organs will be cleared; and the functions of all the Zang-Fu organs can be supported to recover healthy, normal function.

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand upright with the feet one shoulder-width apart and the toes of the feet turned slightly inward. Withdraw the vision and turn the attention inward; tuck the chin in gently and keep the head up as if being pulled skyward from the vertex. Drop the shoulders and relax the hips; keep a slight space in between the arm and the side of the body. Place both hands on the lower elixir field (right hand over the left hand for males, and left hand over the right hand for females). Relax the whole body; keep Baihui (GV-20), the lower elixir field (CV-4), and Huiyin (CV-1) aligned. Press the tongue against the upper palate, breathe naturally, exclude all thoughts, and enter a tranquil meditation state.

2. Qi Permeating the Elixir

After entering the tranquil meditation state, move the hands slowly to the lateral sides of the body with palms facing forward and upward while exhaling. Then move the hands inwards to the lower elixir field while inhaling. Imagine natural Qi from nature collecting and pouring into the lower elixir field, synchronized with the movements of the hands. Repeat this practice 60 times. Abdominal breathing is applied in the practice, which is distending the abdomen while inhaling and retracting it while exhaling. Patients with heavy or prolonged menstrual bleeding should simply practice natural breathing.

3. Opening-Closing at the Elixir Field

While exhaling, move the hands apart slowly from the elixir field to each side of the body with the dorsum of the hands facing each other; this is called "opening." While exhaling, turn the hands over with the palms facing each other and move them slowly back to the lower elixir field; this is termed "closing." Repeat the opening and closing movements 60 times.

4. Circulating Qi in the Eight Trigram

Place two palms at the lower elixir field, one on top of the other, to massage the abdomen. Take the lower elixir field as the center of a circle and the length between the umbilicus and pubis as the diameter; rub the abdomen in a circle as if moving the hands along the rim of the Eight Trigram diagram—Bagua. The movements should be gentle and slow and the focus is on guiding the Qi carefully with the mind and imagining the internal genuine Qi circulating continuously in the abdomen around the Eight Trigram Bagua circle. Rub the abdomen clockwise 36 times and then counterclockwise 36 times while imagining the genuine Qi circulating at the same time. The requirement for breathing is the same as the previous form. It is not necessary to coordinate rubbing movements with the breathing as long as the imagination of genuine Qi

circulation is continuous. The breathing may be interrupted briefly by holding momentarily at the end points of both inhalation and exhalation.

5. Moving Qi to Enforce the Belt Vessel

Move the hands, with the dorsum of the hands facing each other, from the lower elixir field along each side of the waist and the belt vessel to the lower back (where Mingmen (GV-4) is located) during inhalation and conduct the internal Qi from the lower elixir field to Mingmen along the belt vessel simultaneously. Move both hands from Mingmen in the back to the lower elixir field during exhalation, imagining the internal Qi is moving from the Mingmen to the lower elixir field with the movement of the hands. Repeat the form 60 times to circulate Qi and consolidate it in the belt vessel. An additional 36 or 60 times is recommended for patients with heavy periods or prolonged menstrual bleeding.

6. Qi Circulating Along the Shaoyin-Kidney Meridian

Place the tips of the middle finger and the thumb together; clench the hands into hollow fists. While inhaling, raise the fists from both sides slowly to the armpits. Meanwhile, imagine Qi being absorbed from Yongquan (KI-1) along the medial aspect of the ankles, calves, knees, and thighs past Huiyin (CV-1) to the lower elixir field. While exhaling, lower both hands with the palms facing downwards along the flank regions to the level of the thighs. Meanwhile, conduct Qi downward from Mingmen (GV-4) to Huiyin (CV-1) and then along the medial sides of the thighs, knees, calves, and ankles of the two legs respectively to reach Yongquan (KI-1). With these body movements and this breathing pattern, the genuine Qi can flow along the kidney meridians continuously. Patients with heavy periods and prolonged menstrual bleeding will gain added benefit by keeping the mind focused on Danzhong (CV-17).

7. Closing Movements

Use rubbing of the face and head as the closing movements.

1. Rubbing the face: Open the eyes with the mind-intention of "I'm going to end the practice." Resume natural breathing. Place the two middle fingers at Yingxiang (LI-20) and move them upwards to the forehead with the other fingers together to rub the face. Then move the fingers to each side through Taiyang (EX-HN-5), down to the cheeks and the lower jaws. Repeat the movements six times.
2. Rubbing the head: Move the two middle fingers from both sides of the nose up to the forehead and rub the forehead and the head with the other fingers together up to the vertex and then down to the upper neck

where the Fengchi (GB-20) is located. Repeat the movements six times to end the practice.

B. Roborant Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Health Preserving Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

With complicated signs and symptoms, menopause syndrome can be differentiated into more syndromes clinically. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major syndromes: deficiency of kidney Yin and deficiency of kidney Yang.

A. Deficiency of Kidney Yin

Manifestations include: Dizziness, tinnitus, irritability, easily lost temper, insomnia, profuse dreams, soreness and weakness of the lower back and knees, hot flushes, tidal fever, sweating, heat sensation in the palms and soles, scanty and yellow urination, dry mouth, constipation, fluctuating blood pressure, shortened menstrual cycles, heavy menstrual bleeding or spotting, bright or dark red menses, red tongue with little coating or no coating, and thin and rapid pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Utilize Innate Yin Qigong or Roborant Qigong as the main forms, combined with Relaxation Qigong, Internal Nourishing Qigong, and Daoist Art of Prolonging Life.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Innate Yin Qigong practitioners with dysmenorrhea, impeded flowing of menses, or prolonged menses can utilize circulating Qi in the eight-trigram: press with more pressure on the abdomen and rub the abdomen counterclockwise. Try adopting abdominal breathing.
2. For those who select Roborant Qigong as a supplementary form, take either a sitting or standing posture with natural breathing; keep the

mind on the lower elixir field. Cases with heavy menstrual bleeding will benefit from keeping the mind focused on the middle elixir.

3. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as a supplementary form, apply the "inhale-pause-exhale" breathing method to stimulate the activity of the sympathetic nerves in order to reduce or relieve the symptoms of tidal fever and sweating.
4. For those who select Daoist Art of Prolonging Life, conduct eating Qi, enter the tranquil meditation state, shake, and rotate the shoulders 2–4 times a day, 30–60 minutes for each session.

B. Deficiency of Kidney Yang

Manifestations include: Soreness and cold pain in the lower back, cold hands and feet, aversion to cold, palpitations, shortness of breath, lassitude, decreased appetite, clear and profuse urination, loose stools, profuse urination at night, diarrhea before dawn, delayed, scanty, and clear menstruation, leucorrhea, pale and tender tongue with a white coating, and deep and slow pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Utilize Innate Yin Qigong or Health Preserving Qigong as the main forms, combined with Internal Nourishing Qigong and the Six Syllable Formula.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Innate Yin Qigong practitioners with heavy periods, absence of abdominal pain, and deficiency of both Qi and blood should rub the abdomen clockwise and breathe naturally.
2. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as a supplementary form, take the supine position with the "inhale-exhale-pause" breathing method to increase appetite and to relieve symptoms of poor digestion.
3. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, apply the HU and CHUI sounds. Practice six times for each sound, 2–4 sessions a day and 30–60 minutes for each session.

III. Cautions

1. Avoid mental stress, keep an even mood during the treatment, and engage in appropriate physical activities such as walking.

2. Regulate the diet and avoid pungent and spicy food in order to harmonize the spleen and stomach and to nourish the prenatal essence with the postnatal essence.
3. Drug therapy should be combined with Qigong practice for cases with hypertension and heart disease.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for menopause syndrome can be referenced as the Qigong forms for "Zangzao," and tonifying kidney and harmonizing Yin and Yang in ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classics are as follows.

A. "Daoyin Exercise for Kidney" from *Eight Essays on Cherishing Life* (遵生八笺 • 肾脏导引法，冬卷)

"Practice this in the three months of winter. Sit upright and raise both arms. Turn the upper body to the left and to the right 3–5 times to stretch the flank regions. Put the hands on the knees with the palms facing up and rotate the body alternately towards the left and towards the right 3–5 times. Perform the ankle movements of dorsal flexion, plantar flexion, inversion and eversion dozens of times with each ankle to eliminate the pathogenic wind accumulated in the kidney Zang and the lower back areas."

B. "Nursing Life according to Seasons" from *Essentials of Attaining Longevity* or *Xiu Ling Yao Zhi* (修龄要旨 • 四时调摄)

"During the three months of winter, treat Kidney disease with the CHUI sound. Sit up straight and raise both arms. Twist the waist and flank regions 3–5 times. Turn the upper body to the left and to the right 3–5 times to stretch the flank regions. Put the hands on the knees with the palms facing up and rotate the body alternately towards the left and the right 3–5 times. Perform the ankle movements of dorsal flexion, plantar flexion, inversion and eversion dozens of times with each ankle to eliminate the pathogenic wind accumulated in the kidney Zang and the lower back areas."

Note: These two therapies focus on the body movements. Practice them in the winter season, which correspondends to the kidney Zang according to the Five Element theory. The winter season includes the solar terms of the Beginning of Winter, Lesser Snow, Greater Snow, Winter Solstice, Lesser Cold and Greater Cold (from October to December in the lunar calendar). The forms aim to eliminate pathogenic factors in the kidney and the lower back areas through the body movements together with the seasonal effects on the human body. The lower back area is where the kidneys are located, therefore the movements of the lower back support and strengthen the opening and closing of kidney Qi to reinforce the kidney Zang.

C. "Key to Regulating Kidney Water" from *Classic for Longevity* or *Shou Ren Jing* (寿人经 • 理肾水诀)

"Clench both hands into fists and put them against the lateral sides of the lower back tightly and sway the body towards the left and then the right repeatedly to send Qi into the kidney

Zang. Then place both hands in front of the pubic area and sway the body repeatedly to let the Qi flow out of the kidney Zang to the reproductive organs."

Note: Through this practice the meridians and collaterals are regulated and the Qi is supported in flowing smoothly. The body movements associated with breath and mind-intention are especially nourishing to the kidney Zang.

In addition, the therapies recorded in the following books can be used for menopause syndrome: Five Qi Converging to Upper Elixir Field in *Anthology of Life Sundial* (性命圭旨全书), Fire Training Method in *Internal Training of Taiji* or *Taiji Ji Lian Nei Fa* (太极祭炼内法), Water-Fire Regulating Method in *Secret Principles of Health Preservation* or *Yang Sheng Mi Lu* (养生秘录) and Pengzu's Daoyin Exercise in *Daoist Daoyin Exercise for Health Preservation* or *Tai Qing Dao Yin Yang Sheng Fa* (太清导引养生法).

8. Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) refers to a group of general symptoms, including chronic extreme fatigue associated with dizziness, headache, declined memory, soreness and aching pain of the muscles and joints, poor appetite, mild cognitive dysfunction, low-grade fever, etc. It is characterized by a fatigue of unknown cause that is not relieved by rest, and a lack of measurable clinical abnormalities on physical examination and clinical testing. CFS is frequently observed in adults between the ages of 20 and 50 who have been subjected to long-term overwork, physical and mental stress, irregular diet and lifestyle, and other emotional factors which lead to impairment of the nerve, endocrine, immune, circulatory, and musculoskeletal systems. Some investigators have speculated that the autoimmune system may play an important role in the occurrence of CFS.

In April 1987, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the USA officially named this disease chronic fatigue syndrome and developed diagnostic criteria. The primary diagnostic criteria are:

1. prolonged persistent or intermittent fatigue over a six-month period which is not alleviated by rest
2. all other diagnosable illness has been ruled out by case history, signs and symptoms, and physical examinations.

The secondary diagnostic criteria are:

1. low-grade fever
2. sore throat
3. swelling and tender lymph nodes

4. unexplained muscle weakness
5. muscle pain
6. post-exertional fatigue lasting more than 24 hours
7. headache and multi-joint pain without redness and swelling
8. nervous or emotional symptoms
9. unrefreshing sleep or insomnia.

The physical examination criteria are:

1. low-grade fever (mouth temperature: 37.6°C–38.6°C; anus temperature: 37.8°C–38.8°C)
2. non-exudative pharyngitis
3. swelling anterior and posterior cervical lymph nodes as well as the lymph nodes in the axillary fossa.

The diagnosis of CFS can be made if the case meets two of the primary diagnostic criteria, six or more of the secondary diagnostic criteria, and two or more of the physical examination criteria, or if the cases meet more than eight of all the above-mentioned criteria.

The diagnostic criteria of CFS in biomedicine have similar features to syndromes such as consumptive deficiency, Lily disease (melancholia), depression syndrome, and Bi syndrome in TCM. According to TCM theory, CFS is caused by long-term overwork, improper diet, weak innate Qi, emotional injuries, an external cold-dampness attack resulting in deficiency of both Qi and blood, and dysfunction of the five Zangs in activating Qi. Thus external pathogenic factors are able to invade the body and lodge in the muscles and joints, manifesting especially as fatigue, weakness, general pain, etc. In the initial stage of CFS, the spleen and lungs are the most involved. Left untreated, or with improper treatment, CFS leads to the impairments of the liver, kidney, and heart Zang, and exhaustion of the essence.

The treatment principle is to tonify the organs and nourish the Qi and blood. Emphasize tonifying the kidney Qi, essence, and Yin and Yang within the kidneys when treating those who have suffered from CFS over a long period; emphasize tonifying the spleen and lungs, and nourishing the Qi and blood, when treating those who have insufficient prenatal Qi and essence and an unregulated postnatal system; and apply tonifying and reducing methods, which reinforce the original Qi and dispell the evil Qi at the same time, when treating those who are attacked by an external pathogen in addition to an excess-deficiency coexisting pattern of CFS.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Floating and Merging Qigong

As a static form, Floating and Merging Qigong aims at getting into a deep tranquil state to nourish Qi, essence, and mind. "Floating" and "merging" refer to two stages in this form. "Floating," the initial stage, is marked by integration of body and mind. "Merging," the advanced stage, is marked by integration of heaven and human, void and nothingness, and the forgetting of self and surroundings.

1. Body Adjustment

Standing, sitting, or lying postures can be used freely according to the individual's condition. The standing or sitting posture is recommended for beginners. Select from the holding-ball, pressing-ball, or flying posture with the arms during the stage of "floating." After adjusting to the posture, slightly oscillate the body to induce the floating sensation. For example, in a ball-holding posture, move the arms slightly apart as if playing an accordion; in a flying posture, wave the arms up and down like a bird. In the stage of "merging," keep the body static, because the feeling of merging one's body and being into the universe cannot be induced through body movements. Therefore, keeping the body in a static state is crucial to achieving the merging sensation. Thus, from the turning point between the slightly moving posture to the static state of the body, the exercise is transformed from floating to merging.

2. Breathing Adjustment

Start from natural chest breathing and gradually change to fetal breathing. The key point is doing it naturally. As long as one uses natural and stable breathing under the feeling of floating and merging, deep, long, soft, and thin fetal breathing can eventually be achieved.

3. Mind Adjustment

This is the key point of the whole form. In the floating stage, chant "floating" silently to exclude thoughts and to induce a floating sensation in the body. If chanting one word fails, apply more words such as "floating up" or "my body is floating," or imagine the body floating in the air as if on a white cloud or a balloon. As soon as the floating sensation is felt, focus on the sensation itself: enlarge it, strengthen it, stabilize it, and harmonize it. When it feels as if there are no roots underneath the feet in the standing posture, or the buttocks feel suspended in the sitting posture and there is a sense of weightlessness in the whole body, then one may transfer into the "merging" stage.

In the merging stage, use the method of chanting "floating and merging" or "dissolving," or imagine the body merging into the air, to induce the feeling of merging. As the physical body gradually seems as though it is disappearing, the internal and external Qi are integrated into one. The sensation of the body disappearing usually develops first as parts of the body and then the whole body disappearing. The sensation or experience can oscillate from on to off, from partially to totally disappearing or dissolving. When the boundary between the body and the external environment is broken, there is often an indescribable feeling of liberty, relaxation, comfort, and joy that can be felt physically and mentally.

Guidelines for Floating and Merging Qigong: Do not try to keep the mind on the elixir fields, do not use any special type of breathing practice such as abdominal or reverse breathing, and do not try to utilize any specific postures or movements. Focus on experiencing the feeling of the floating and the merging, and the whole process of floating and merging leading into a profound integration of the three adjustments and a sense of oneness. Practice the form once or twice daily in the morning or evening, 30–60 minutes per session.

Floating and Merging Qigong is a kind of natural or spontaneous practice that produces peaceful and happy feelings to help eliminate physical and mental fatigue and distress. It is a long-term practice that greatly nourishes the spirit and strengthens both the body and mind. Thus many chronic diseases may be effectively treated with this practice.

B. Internal Nourishing Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Eight Pieces of Brocade

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

With complex indications and symptoms, CFS can be differentiated into more syndromes clinically. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major syndromes: Qi deficiency and dampness accumulation, and Zang and Fu organ deficiency.

A. Qi Deficiency and Dampness Accumulation

Manifestations include: Fatigue that is not relieved by rest, muscle ache and joint pain, a heavy sensation of the head as if it is being wrapped, poor appetite, slight aversion to cold, pale tongue with white and slippery coating, and thin and soft pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Utilize Internal Nourishing Qigong and Standing Stake as the main forms, combined with Eight Pieces of Brocade and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as the main form, the lying posture and natural breathing are recommended for severe cases; the sitting posture is useful for mild cases. Relax the body. Tranquilize the mind by keeping it on the lower elixir field during the breath adjustment. Use the inhale-exhale-pause breathing method; practice 2–3 times per day, 30–45 minutes per session.
2. Standing Stake: This can be applied for mild cases and young patients in lifting and thrusting postures. Implement this exercise 1–2 times per day, 15–20 minutes per session.
3. Eight Pieces of Brocade: This can be conducted alternately with Internal Nourishing Qigong, or for more serious cases when physical strength is recovered. Practice "Holding the Heaven with Two Hands to Regulate the Three Jiao," "Pressing Heaven and Earth to Regulate Spleen and Stomach," "Looking Backward to Treat Overstrain and Injury," "Bouncing the Heels Repeatedly to Cure All Kinds of Disease," etc.
4. Beating the heavenly drum, tapping the teeth, and gargling with saliva from Health Preserving Qigong can be applied in the closing movements.

B. Zang and Fu Organ Deficiency

Manifestations include: Fatigue that is not relieved by rest, aching body, palpitations, shortness of breath, soreness and weakness of the lower back and knees, poor memory, tidal fever, night sweating, dark tongue with little coating, and deep, thin, and forceless pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Implement Floating and Merging Qigong as the primary form, combined with the Six Syllable Formula, Stake Standing, and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Practice Floating and Merging Qigong in a cross-legged sitting posture or lotus position for the best results. The natural cross-legged sitting posture can be used by beginners, which may be gradually transformed to a single cross-legged sitting and finally lotus position.
2. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, apply mainly the "HU" and "CHUI" sounds in order to regulate the essence and Qi of the spleen, stomach, liver, and kidney.
3. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, conduct "Scarlet Dragon Stirring in the Ocean" and rubbing Yongquan (KI-1) mainly.

III. Cautions

1. Eat a proper diet; avoid cold and raw food.
2. Regulate the rhythm of the lifestyle to reduce physical and mental stress and engage in more relaxing activities.
3. Keep healthy life habits; avoid wind and cold, and expose yourself more to the sunshine.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for CFS can be referenced in the Qigong forms for "consumptive disease," and "internal injury induced heat" in the ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from the classics are as follows.

A. "Symptomology of Consumptive Disease and Body Pain" from *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* (诸病原候论 • 虚劳身痛候)

"Health Preserving Daoyin says, 'Raise the arms and hands with the elbows and fingers extended, and body and palms facing south. Move the arms in all directions, and then bend the forearms downward with the elbow fully flexed until the arms cannot be bent anymore—for 28 repetitions. Drop the arms on both sides of the body, and extend the arms backward 14 times to scatter the Qi. Move both arms up and down 14 times to eliminate the discomfort and pain in the body, the arms and the flank areas. Conduct these Daoyin exercises step by step and continuously. Over time, the CFS syndrome can be cured completely."

"Sit with legs straight. Hold the toes with the hands. Lower the head and hold the breath for nine breathing cycles to relieve pain in the neck, the spine, the lower back, and the feet as well as consumptive disorders."

"Lie on one side with both feet on the bed, with the hands on the sides of the body; inhale through the nose seven times to relieve pain in the bones."

"Sit up straight and stretch the back, raise the right hand with the palm facing upward, move the left arm backward and turn the palm downward, inhale through the nose seven times, but keep the left arm and hand still for an intervals between each breathe to eliminate pain in the arms and the lower back."

"Kneel down and bend the body forward to the level where the head is 5 inches higher than the ground, then lift the head up and face upward. Fully extend both hands simultaneously with the left hand at the front of the body and the right hand at the back 14 times and then switch the arms, and extend them 14 times with the right hand at the front and the left hand at the back. This balances Yin and Yang in the arms, bones, spine, and tendons to relieve distending and twisting pain."

"Sit on one foot with the other knee flexed. Place one hand on top of one knee and press it downward, extend the other hand to the opposite side, and raise the head and keep this position for a while. Repeat the movements 14 times. Alternate the sides, and complete the same movements 14 times to eliminate twisting and distending pain in hips, chest, neck and armpits that is due to obstructed blood. Kneel down on two knees first, and then move one foot forward to its limit, bend the body, head and face over the first two toes. Repeat the movements 21 times. Perform the same movements with the other foot forward 21 times to eliminate fullness, pain and uncomfortable feelings in the arms, waist, back, hip, and knees and to regulate the Qi, blood and fluid in the five Zang and six Fu organs. After these movements, flex one knee and place the weight on it, extend the other knee backward to its limit, dorsal-flex the toes with force, extend both arms backwards as if flying up to the sky and face upward. Keep this position for a while. Repeat the movements 14 times and then change to the other side, perform the same movements 14 times to relieve an uncomfortable sensation in the whole body."

"Extend both feet with toes dorsal-flexed, extend both arms with palms facing each other and fingers extended. Raise the head and stretch the spinal column to its limit three times. Separate both feet with a third of a meter between. Keep the hands in the original place with the palms moving outwards seven times, and then separate both feet with a distance of two thirds of a meter in between and move both palms downwards to touch the ground three times to eliminate the consumption weakness, relieve uncomfortable joints and tendons and decrease pain in the bones and marrow. Extend both legs to the lateral sides of the body with knees straight, hold both soles with the hands and, keeping the mind on the soles, extend the hands and feet. Repeat the movements 21 times to sedate pain of the calves, the arms and the lower back."

Note: This Health Preserving Daoyin exercise with seven parts and ten forms is a set of therapeutic methods for consumptive weakness and body pain. Various postures include standing, supine, sitting with knees straight, sitting with knees bent, kneeling, squatting, flying and plain sitting posture. The Daoyin exercises are characterized by simple or complicated postures, slow or quick movements, focusing on specific areas and on general body regulation. Therefore, one can choose corresponding methods according to different syndrome manifestations and the unique requirements of the patient.

B. "Massage Principles for Inner Nourishment" from *Effective Approaches to a Long Life* (寿世青编 • 内养下手决)

"Before conducting massage, adjust the breath, exclude thoughts, and adapt the body to the external climate—warmth or coldness, dryness or dampness. Sit in a clean room; calm the mind by closing the eyes and tapping the teeth 36 times. Place the thumb at Laogong (PC-8), the center of the palm, rub the palm till a sensation of heat is felt, then use the thumb to rub the whole eye nine times for each eye and rub both sides of the nose nine times. Rub the palms until heat is felt, close the mouth, hold the breath, and rub the face many times, the more the better. These exercises are termed 'Daily Exercise of the Perfected Person.' Press the tongue against upper palate, stir the tongue in the mouth to produce saliva, swallow it in three gulps, which are named 'Red Dragon Obtains Water' or 'Jade Fluid Refines Oneself,' to nourish the internal organs, brighten the face and clear the eyes, moisten the Lung and relieve a cough. It is not necessary to conduct these exercises at specific times; you can exercise after midnight when Yang Qi starts to rise, or during sleeping, or during any free times during the day."

Note: This form is actually one part of Eight Pieces of Brocade in Lying Posture, but explained here in more detail. Use Eight Pieces of Brocade in Lying Posture as described in this book for reference. The form has a positive effect in nourishing Qi and essence, and is easy to practice.

9. Insomnia

Insomnia is identified as difficulty in sleeping or insufficient rest due to disturbed sleep. Insomnia can be caused by environmental factors and emotional or physical disorders. Among these, emotional disorders are the most commonly seen. Insomnia has various clinical manifestations, such as difficulty in falling asleep, restless or unsatisfying sleep, frequent awakening with difficulty falling asleep again, or, in severe cases, inability to sleep the whole night. Patients with neurosis or menopause syndrome often suffer from insomnia.

In TCM, insomnia is called "sleeplessness," "inability to lie," "inability to sleep," or "inability to close the eyes." The etiology and pathogenesis are:

1. damage to the heart and the spleen due to overthinking or overworrying so that deficient Qi and blood are unable to nourish the heart and mind (Shen)
2. kidney damage due to fright or fear or uncontrollable sexual activities, in which deficient kidney Yin generates empty fire, interferes with the communication between the heart and the kidney, and disturbs the heart and the peace of the mind
3. unregulated liver function caused by heart and gallbladder deficiency; accumulated dampness and phlegm leading to phlegm-heat disturbing

the mind; depression and emotional disorder stagnating the liver Qi; or liver Yang rising disturbing the heart and mind

4. disharmonized stomach and spleen due to improper diet; there is an old saying: "when the stomach is uncomfortable, one cannot sleep well."

The treatment principle for insomnia is to harmonize the Qi and nourish the blood for deficient cases, and to clear the heat, dissolve the phlegm, purge the obstruction, promote the digestion, descend the upward-rising Yang, house the Shen, and calm the mind for the excess cases.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Sleep-Inducing Qigong

This form has the effect of inducing sleep by relaxing the muscles after tightening them; there are posture changes between standing, sitting, and supine in the practice, and it is usually practiced before going to sleep.

1. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise by Raising the Arms

Preparatory posture: Stand naturally with the arms hanging at the sides of the body.

Movements: Raise both arms forward to the horizontal level with the elbows straight, clench both hands into fists, and tighten the muscles of the whole arms while inhaling; then slightly tilt the upper body forward, hang the two arms down and swing them back and forth to relax the muscles of the arms and shoulders, and silently chant "relax" while exhaling. Repeat the movements 6–9 times.

2. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise for Shoulder and Elbow

Preparatory posture: Stand naturally with the arms hanging at both sides of the body.

Movements: Raise both arms forward to the horizontal level with elbows fully flexed, clench both hands into fists tightly in front of the chest, and tighten the muscles of the shoulders and upper arms while inhaling. Then lower both arms with the upper body slightly tilted forward, and relax the shoulders and elbows while exhaling. Repeat the movements 6–9 times.

3. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise for the Muscles of the Whole Body

Preparatory posture: Stand naturally with both legs closed, arms straight and fingers of both hands crossed in front of the body.

Movements: Lift the heels with the ball of the foot and toes touching the ground, and raise both arms to tighten the muscles of the whole body while inhaling; then lower the arms and separate the two hands. Squat down with the head bent forward naturally, and focus the mind on relaxing the muscles while exhaling. Repeat the movements 6–9 times.

4. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise for Head and Neck

Preparatory posture: Sit with both hands holding each other (fingers lightly laced) at the back of the head.

Movements: Extend the head and the neck against the hands forcibly and tuck the chin in as much as possible to tighten the muscles in the head and the neck while inhaling. Then relax the chin, the neck, and the head muscles completely while exhaling. Repeat the movements 6–9 times. Apply gentle massage to the face afterwards.

5. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise for the Lower Limbs

Preparatory posture: Sit and put both hands on the knees.

Movements: Press both legs with the hands and press the ground with both feet to tighten the muscles of the lower limbs while inhaling. Relax both legs and arms and focus the mind on relaxing while exhaling. Repeat the movements 6–9 times.

6. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise for the Upper and Lower Back

Preparatory posture: Take a supine position with the hands stretched along the sides of the body.

Movements: Press the bed with both hands, tighten the muscles of the whole back, and lift the body up slightly while inhaling. Then relax the arms and lower the body, and focus the mind on relaxing the back and the body while exhaling. Repeat the movements 6–9 times.

7. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise for the Abdomen

Preparatory posture: Take a supine position and place both hands at the back of the head with the fingers crossed.

Movements: Slightly lift the head to tighten the muscles of the abdomen. Then lower the head and relax the muscles of the abdomen. Lay both palms on the abdomen and rub it clockwise with the mind relaxed. Repeat the movements 3–5 times.

8. Tightening and Relaxing Exercise for Fingers and Toes

Preparatory posture: In a supine position, flex both elbows at a 90° angle in front of the head. Bend both legs at a 120° angle with the upper leg on top of the lower one and the upper foot in the back of the lower one. Close the eyes.

Movements: Tighten the fingers and toes while inhaling. Then relax the fingers and the toes while exhaling and silently chant "I'm so comfortable and relaxed, I don't even want to move the fingers and toes now." Repeat the movements and the chanting 3–5 times.

9. Relaxing Exercise for the Muscles of the Whole Body in a Supine Posture

Preparatory posture: Take a lateral recumbent position.

Movements: Relax the whole body through the silent chanting of "relax," and "comfortable" and entering into a static state gradually.

B. Roborant Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Eight Pieces of Brocade

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

With complex indications and symptoms, insomnia can be differentiated into more syndromes clinically. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major syndromes: phlegm-fire disturbing internally, and deficiency of the heart, spleen, liver and kidney.

A. Phlegm-Fire Disturbing Internally

Manifestations include: Insomnia, a heavy sensation of the head and body, profuse sputum, fullness and stuffiness of chest and abdomen, poor appetite and belching, acid regurgitation and nausea, irritability, bitter taste in the mouth, dizziness or vertigo, greasy and yellow coating on the tongue, and slippery and rapid pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Utilize Sleep-Inducing Qigong or Roborant Qigong as the main form, combined with Health Preserving Qigong and Standing Stake.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. For those who select Standing Stake as a supplementary form, apply Standing Stake of the natural type, three-circle type, downward pressing type, or resting type to regulate the body until a comfortable sensation is felt and the body and mind are relaxed. Keep the mind on the elixir fields to perceive the Qi sensations there. Start with five minutes for each session and gradually increase to 30 minutes per session.
2. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, practice tapping the teeth, stirring the tongue, gargling with saliva, swallowing the saliva and conducting it down to the lower elixir, as well as the form of Harmonizing the Belt Vessel; then place both palms on the umbilicus and rub the abdomen clockwise in 18 circles to close the practice.

B. Deficiency of the Heart, Spleen, Liver, and Kidney

Manifestations include: Malnourishment of the Heart and the mind, irritability and insomnia, dizziness or vertigo, tinnitus, forgetfulness, palpitations, shortness of breath, lassitude and fatigue, poor appetite, abdominal distension, proptosis of the internal organs, soreness and weakness of the lower back and knees, cold hands and feet, seminal emission, impotence, pale tongue with thin coating, and feeble and weak pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Sleep-Inducing Qigong or Roborant Qigong as the main form, combined with Relaxation Qigong or Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. For those who select Relaxation Qigong as a supplementary form, use a sitting, standing or supine posture and mainly apply nose inhaling and mouth exhaling for the breathing. At the beginning of each session, use natural breathing for 2–3 minutes, followed by the Tri-Line Relaxation Sequence, Holistic Relaxation Qigong, or Part-by-Part Relaxation Qigong to calm and concentrate the mind. The mind-intention should

be conducted so subtly that it does not seem to exist. Naturally conclude the practice and go to sleep when sleepiness is felt.

2. Health Preserving Qigong: Tap the teeth, gargle with saliva, swallow the saliva, etc. Rub both hands together till a hot feeling is felt, and then rub the abdomen clockwise and counterclockwise 18 circles each to close the practice.

III. Cautions

1. Avoid both physical and emotional disturbances. Ensure that there is a favorable external environment and enough time for the practice and sleep.
2. Maintain a proper balance between physical activities, exercise, and rest. The duration of the practice may be 0.5–1 hour for patients with moderate physical strength, or 1.5–2 hours for patients with stronger physical strength; divide the time into two sessions and practice them in the morning and afternoon.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

There are many Qigong therapies for "sleeplessness" in ancient Qigong literature. The major therapies selected from some important classics are as follows.

A. "Daoyin Movements for Resolving Phlegm and Clearing Heat" from *Incisive Light on the Source of Miscellaneous Diseases* (杂病源流犀烛 • 痰火导引)

"*Essentials for Health Preservation* says: sit with knees straight, form a small circle with the thumb and index finger, extend the other three fingers. Lower the head and bend the body to hold the tips of the toes three times. Raise the head and body with strength. Swallow the saliva downward to the to the lower elixir field. Repeat these movements 20 times. In the meantime, keep the mind on the elixir field."

Note: by practicing the movements described in this dynamic Daoyin form, the four limbs and spinal column can be fully stretched and the occiput, Fengfu (GV-16) and Dazhui (GV-14) areas can be stimulated; therefore, the brain function can be regulated and improved.

B. "Method of Nourishing the Heart" from *Incisive Light on the Source of Miscellaneous Disease* (杂病源流犀烛 • 心脏修养)

"The book of *Health Preservation* says: practice at the beginning of the fourth and the fifth month of the lunar calendar year, sit straight and face south in the morning, tap the teeth nine times and gargle with saliva three times. Concentrate the mind on imagining the inhalation of red Qi (Qi of the sun) of LI (离, a phase of the Eight Trigrams located in the south representing the fire) and swallow in three gulps, and then pause breathing for the duration of 30 breaths." "An immortal said: sit straight, clench both hands into fists, push

the left fist against the right forcefully six times, and then push the right fist against the left six times. Or put one hand on the stomach, raise one hand as if holding a heavy stone; do the same movement with the hands switched. Cross the fingers and flex the body, step on the hands with both feet 5–6 times to eliminate wind pathogenic factors in the chest and heart. And then, pause the breathing for quite a while, close the eyes, swallow the saliva in three gulps, and tap the teeth three times to end the practice."

Note: This therapy includes mind imagination, conducting the Qi and Daoyin movements, in which it integrates both static and dynamic Qigong. While tapping the teeth, concentrate the mind on it and tap the upper and lower teeth gently. When swallowing the saliva, intentionally conduct it downward to the lower elixir field to foster Qi there. This is so called jade essence returning to the elixir.

In addition, Qigong forms recorded in other classics also have therapeutic effect for insomnia, including Reinforcing the Gallbladder Qi in *Classic of the Yellow Yard on Five-Zang and Six-Fu Organs* (黄庭五脏六腑真人玉轴经), Static Breathing Method in *Feng's Embroidered Bag* or *Feng Shi Jin Nang* (冯氏锦囊), Mozi's Method of Moving Qi in *Seven Tablets from the Cloudy Satchel* (云笈七签), and Massage and Daoyin Methods in *Classic of Left Cave* or *Zuo Dong Zhen Jing* (左洞真经).

10. Tumor and Cancer

Tumor refers to the abnormal proliferation of human cells due to various factors. It includes benign and malignant tumors. Benign tumors manifest as a confined localized mass with aching or distending pain, and some secondary symptoms due to the compression of the nearby tissues. Benign tumors are typically not life threatening, and have a positive prognosis. Malignant tumors have unregulated growth and the ability to invade locally and spread to other parts of the body via blood and lymphatic circulation. Malignant tumors with their characteristic of a stone-like texture and irregular shape and size are also called cancer. Malignant tumors typically develop in middle-aged or older people, though there are cases of pediatric tumor as well. Clinical manifestations of a malignant tumor include a locally fixed hard and irregular-shaped mass that can in many cases be palpated, a dark purple color and fetid odor at the sites of erosion, severe pain, and rapid consumption and wasting of the body, accompanied by various dysfunctional symptoms. Malignant tumors have a more unfavorable prognosis than benign tumors and threaten the patient's life.

In TCM, tumor is called accumulation and is also referred to as aggregation, abscess, tumor, cancer, abdominal masses, etc. The complicated causes of tumor can be classified into two sources or categories: external factors and internal factors. The former refers to six pathogenic factors, while the latter includes emotional disorders and deficiency in vital Qi. When these factors exist for a long time, they lead to imbalance of Yin and Yang, dysfunction of the Zang-

Fu organs, obstruction of meridians, abnormal circulation of Qi and blood, stagnation of Qi and blood, and accumulation of phlegm and toxicities, resulting in tumors. The occurrence of tumors can also result from extenuating causative factors including age, genetic mutations, diet and life habits, exposure to toxic elements, etc.

Integration of enhancing the vital Qi and eliminating the pathogenic factors is the main treatment principle for treating tumor. Generally speaking, apply the principle of eliminating the pathogenic factors in the initial stage. Combine this with enhancing Qi in the middle stage. Finally, emphasize enforcing the vital Qi in the later stage. Qigong is usually applied after the surgical removal of the tumor, although there are cases of tumor cured mainly by Qigong without surgery.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Increasing Pressure and Emitting Qi in a Burst

1. Increasing Pressure

Stand naturally, inhale, and conduct Qi downward to the lower elixir field, Qihai (CV-6). Hold the breath, and move the diaphragm upward and downward at a moderate or high speed to increase the pressure in the abdominal cavity—to pressurize and heat the Qi.

2. Conducting the Qi

Mentally direct the Qi of high pressure and temperature to the organs and areas where the lesions (tumors) are located.

3. Dispelling the Evil Pathogen

1. Exhale through the nose rapidly and tighten the whole body around the center of the abdomen to concentrate and emit Qi in a burst to destroy the tumors and expel the Qi and toxicities.
2. Mentally eliminate the pathogenic evil Qi and toxicities of the tumor out of the organ or the body part through the acupoints, pores of the skin, and the exhalation of the breath.
3. Perceive a gradually relaxed sensation after each burst and elimination. This helps clear the Qi and blood and resolve the tumor.

Repeat this practice with holding the breath and releasing bursts of Qi. The duration for holding the breath can be adjusted according to the individual's condition. Beginners might repeat these movements three times. Gradually

increase the number of times whenever the patient has become reasonably skillful in the practice. The patient may feel more comfortable due to the elimination of pathogenic factors through the practice.

4. Closing Movements

Put both hands together for a while until a warm sensation is felt. Rub the face and comb the hair, relax the shoulders, back, knees, and ankles, and tranquilize the mind. End the practice when a quiet sensation is felt.

Key point of practice: Mind concentration.

Important point of practice: Increase the pressure of Qi to eliminate the pathogenic evil and toxicities.

B. New Qigong Therapy

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Five Elements Palm

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

With complex indications and symptoms, tumor can be differentiated into more syndromes clinically. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major syndromes: Qi stagnation and blood stasis, and deficiency of Qi and blood with damaged vital Qi.

A. Qi Stagnation and Blood Stasis

Mostly the tumors are located in the interior of the body or in important organs, which makes it difficult for them to be removed surgically. These include liver cancer, brain tumor, or multiple bone tumors. The clinical manifestations include body pain, emaciation, lassitude and fatigue, poor appetite, insomnia, fear, etc.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Increasing Pressure and Emitting Qi in a Burst or New Qigong Therapy as the primary Qigong forms. Combine with Relaxation Qigong or Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. New Qigong Therapy is for treating and preventing cancer. For those who select New Qigong Therapy, mainly practice the wind breathing and fast-walking forms, and conduct them step by step. Start with Moderate Wind Breathing with Natural Walking Qigong; practice them at least twice a day, and allow over 60 minutes for each session. Later-stage cancer patients should apply Fastest or Faster Walking Qigong as the main form. Initial-stage cancer patients should give priority to One-Two-Three Step Walking Qigong with Moderate Wind Breathing rather than Faster Walking Qigong.
2. For those who select Relaxation Qigong as a supplementary form, focus on relaxing the body part where the tumor is located to reduce the pain, distension and other uncomfortable sensations.
3. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, practice the entire set of the Qigong in order to give every body part a positive stimulus and to promote the functional activities of the whole body system.

B. Deficiency of Qi and Blood with Damaged Vital Qi

Patients with this pattern are weak in Qi and blood, with damaged vital Qi mainly from postsurgery or prolonged disease. Clinical manifestations include emaciation, pale and withered complexion, lassitude, fatigue, insomnia or profuse dreams, dizziness, tinnitus, soreness and weakness of the back and limbs, cold hands and feet, poor appetite, pale tongue, and thin and weak pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Initiate Increasing Pressure and Emitting Qi in a Burst or New Qigong Therapy as the primary Qigong forms combined with Internal Nourishing Qigong and Roborant Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Apply Natural Breathing and Slow-Walking Qigong in New Qigong Therapy, through the three opening-closings at the middle elixir field, slow-walking, and mind-intention, to generate internal Qi and conduct Qi back to the origin. The forms are aimed at supporting vital Qi and eliminating the pathogenic factors. Later-stage cancer patients should continue to apply Wind Breathing and Fast Walking Qigong after surgery to maintain the effect of the surgery.

2. For those who select Internal Nourishing Qigong as a supplementary form, practice in a sitting or standing posture with positive mind-intention and the "inhale-pause-exhale" breathing method. Practice twice a day in the morning and in the evening, 20–40 minutes for each session.
3. For those who select Roborant Qigong as a supplementary form, use the high posture downward pressing position twice a day, 30 minutes for each session, and gradually increase the practice time according to physical strength.

III. Cautions

1. Tumor patients should be treated by integrated Western medicine and TCM; avoid the limitation of a single therapy in order to control the future development of the tumor.
2. Tumor patients should have confidence and a positive attitude toward overcoming the disease, and cooperate in the treatment.
3. Prevention is equally important as treatment for tumor patients. Ensure early diagnosis and immediate Qigong practice, and persist with Qigong practice—even for a lifetime.
4. Ensure sufficient nutrients and proper rest as well as a stable mood during the practice.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The Qigong therapy for tumor can be referenced in the Qigong forms for accumulation, aggregation, abscess, tumor, cancer, abdominal masses in the ancient Qigong literature. The important ancient Qigong forms are as follows.

A. *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* (诸并源候论)

"*Health Preserving Daoyin* records: step the right foot on the left foot to eliminate the accumulations in the stomach Fu. Also for aggregation and accumulation in the stomach Fu, sit upright with back straight and head up facing the sun. Inhale Qi with open mouth, slowly. Swallow it 30 times, and then open the eyes. Also, for aggregation and accumulation in the flank region, sit upright with the back straight, raise both arms with palms facing upward, inhale through the nose and then hold the breath for the duration of seven breaths."

B. "Daoist Classic of Health Preserving Daoyin" (太清导引养生经) and *Seven Tablets from the Cloudy Satchel* (云笈七签)

"Lie on the left side, exhale with the mouth and inhale with the nose to eliminate the accumulations in the stomach Fu."

C. "Symptoms and Treatment of Accumulation Syndrome" from *Incisive Light on the Source of Miscellaneous Diseases* (杂病源流犀烛)

"Qibo said: if accumulation is not influenced by the diet, acupuncture and moxibustion should not be applied, and herbs alone cannot cure it. However, Daoyin and herbs applied consistently over time are suitable to influence such accumulation. *Obtaining Effects* says: make fists with thumbs pressing the ring fingers and press the thighs, sit with the legs crossed, tap the teeth 36 times, hold the breath for the duration of 21 breaths, and swallow Qi in three gulps. Repeat these movements three times until the Qi is smoothly circulated. Conduct these forms at Zi (11 pm–1 am), Wu (11 am–1 pm), Mao (5–7 am) and You (5–7 pm)."

Note: The forms recorded in *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases*, *Daoist Classic of Health Preserving Daoyin*, and *Seven Tablets from the Cloudy Satchel* are the forms in which Daoyin movements coordinate with breath adjustment. Generally, holding the breath is needed when practicing those forms because it is easy to activate the genuine Qi in this way. When the genuine Qi is activated, it can promote the circulation of Qi to unblock stagnation and remove the accumulation. Different Daoyin movements regulate the Qi circulating in different areas, which can be perceived during the practice. Apply the forms flexibly according to different conditions of the diseases. The form recorded in *Incisive Light on the Source of Miscellaneous Disease* specifies the time for practice, which is a reflection of "correspondence between heaven and human beings."

D. *Essentials for Health Preservation* (保生秘要)

"Extend the left arm forward and upward, and extend the right arm backward and downward, hold the breath and twist the body and neck; then switch arms and twist the body and neck to the other side. Thus twist the body left and then right, 17 times for each side, stop the movements when a warm sensation felt and slight sounds are seemingly heard. And then continue with the next form." "Concentrate the mind on the navel and direct Qi to the lesions (tumors). Alternatively, imagine cutting the masses with a knife, consuming them with Fire, or washing them away with pure water."

Note: This form is recorded in *Essentials for Health Preservation* and belongs to the category of Qigong methods known as imagery observation. Daoyin movements and imagination should be carried out in coordination. The main purpose of the Daoyin is activating genuine Qi, so after becoming skillful in activating genuine Qi, the patient may practice the imagery observation alone, without the movement. During the process of imagery observation, keep the mind-intention subtle since genuine Qi is difficult to activate with over concentrated mind-intention. Keep the thought on accumulations which are being dispersed as if by the knife, consumed by the fire, or washed away by a flood.

11. Lower Back Pain and Leg Pain

Lower back pain and leg pain are felt below the lower lumbar down to the leg region, with complicated causes and various contributing factors. According to biomedicine, the causes for lower back and leg pain include: inflammatory conditions in the upper and lower back such as ankylosing spondylitis, rheumatoid-like fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic fibromuscular arthritis, and osteoarthritis in the lumbarsacral region and knees. In addition, pain in the lower back and legs can be caused by degenerative disease of the lumbar vertebra such as senile osteoporosis, degeneration of inter-vertebral discs, and spinal canal stenosis, as well as various acute or chronic traumatic injuries of the bone, ligament, tendon, muscle, or fascia in the inter-vertebral joints in the lumbar and leg areas.

Lower back pain and leg pain belong to Bi-syndrome (obstructive syndrome) in TCM; they are also known as lumbar and leg Bi-syndrome, bone Bi-syndrome, and kidney Bi-syndrome. Bi is often a combined syndrome of internal deficiency and external excess. Kidney deficiency is typically the internal causative factor. Wind, cold, and damp as well as blood stasis from traumatic injuries are the external and superficial causative factors. *Discussion on Bi-Syndrome* from *Plain Questions* (素问 • 痹论)[1] points out that "Bi-syndrome is caused by the emergence of wind, cold, and damp." *Discussion on Essentials* or *Zhi Zhen Yao Da Lun* (素问 • 至真要大论)[1] also says that "the root of the disease with lower back and neck pain, and dizziness, is often kidney deficiency." As the pain is the chief manifestation of this disease, *Discussion on Pain* or *Ju Tong Lun* (素问 • 举痛论)[1] says that "cold causes impeded flowing of blood and Qi, resulting in pain." In summary, lower back and leg pain can be attributed to weak constitution, body weakness due to prolonged illness, liver and kidney deficiency resulting from aging, tendon and bone malnourishment of the essence and blood, frequent external invasion by wind, cold and damp, overwork, and traumatic injury, all of which can cause blocked meridians and stagnation of Qi and blood and, further, can lead to lower back and leg pain.

Lower back pain and leg pain present with the deficiency in the root (internal factors, mostly deficient kidneys) and the excess in the branch (external pathogens). It is important to treat the root and the branches together. The method of treating the root is to regulate the kidney Yin and Yang, to nourish the heart and the kidneys, or to nourish the liver and the kidneys accordingly; when more organs are affected with prolonged illness, this promotes the functions of the Zang and Fu organs. The method of treating the branches is to dispel the wind and the cold, warm and unblock the meridians, invigorate the blood, and dissolve the stasis.

To treat lower back and leg pain, dynamic Qigong is the primary form applied by the modern Qigong therapy due to its effects in dredging the meridians and collaterals, activating the limbs, bones, and all the body parts, and eliminating the external wind-cold-damp pathogenic factors. Static Qigong is used as the assistant form to strengthen the internal vital Qi, concentrate the mind, and improve body function. Thus, dynamic and static Qigong coordinate to cure the disease by eliminating the evil Qi and reinforcing the vital Qi.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Six-Step Qigong for Strengthening the Back

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand relaxed and quietly. Calm the mind and take deep and long breaths (exhaling deeper), 3–6 times. Tighten the anus and press the tongue against the upper palate while inhaling, hold the breath for a while, and then relax while exhaling.

2. A Dragon Playing with a Ball

Place both outer Laogong (EX-UE-8) at Shenshu (UB-23) lightly, rotate the head to the left and then to the right as much as possible, and extend the head (to look at the sky) and flex the head (to look at the ground) three times in each direction.

3. A White Crane Spreading its Wings

Lift both arms upward with elbows flexed; rotate both shoulder joints from the back of the body to the front three times and rotate them from the front to the back three times; and then shrug the shoulders, pressing them down three times for each motion.

4. A Lion Looking Backward (Turning the Body and Looking Backward)

Take the horse-riding stance. Place the left outer Laogong (EX-UE-8) against Mingmen (GV-4). Raise the right hand upward along a circular orbit from the right side of the body (in the same plane as the body) to the forehead, rotate the upper body to the left side without moving the heels, and look at the right heel while inhaling and tightening the anus. Hold the breath and stop the movement for a while. Exhale and resume the original posture. Repeat these movements three times for each side.

5. A Lotus Leaf Waving in the Wind (Relaxing and Rotating the Lower Back)

Stand relaxed and quietly and place both outer Laogong (EX-UE-8) lightly at Shenshu (UB-23). Move the lower back and the hips horizontally in a circular motion; two circles count as one time. Repeat these movements three times clockwise and three times counterclockwise.

6. Holding the Feet with Both Hands

Cross the fingers of both hands with palms facing upward in front of the abdomen. Lift both arms and turn the palms to support the heaven with the head up looking at the dorsum of the hands. Bend the body laterally to the left side once and to the right side once. Then bend the body forward with the knees straight to touch the dorsum of the feet with both palms, and straighten the body to the original standing posture three times.

7. A White Crane Rotating the Knees

Stand with the feet apart, slightly flex both knees, and place the palms on the knees. Rotate the knees clockwise and counterclockwise three times in each direction. Rotate the knees from the medial side to the lateral side three times, and then from the lateral side to the medial side three times.

8. Closing Movements

Stand relaxed and quietly and cross both arms in front of the abdomen. Raise the arms in a circular orbit to the top of the head with palms facing downwards. Keep the middle fingers pointed at each other and move them downward till they reach the level of the lower abdomen, then turn the palms inwards and lay them on the lower abdomen (slightly flex the knees at the same time). Repeat these movements three times.

Key points of practice: During the whole process of the practice, focus the mind internally (on KI-1 or CV-8) or externally (on the external environment, such as the beautiful scenery of flowers, grass, and trees). Patients with hypertension or coronary heart disease are advised not to hold their breath with too much effort and not to lower the head or rotate the head and neck too much, but to conduct the movements slowly and gently. The form can be exercised wholly or selectively, in parts. Conduct the closing movements attentively in all cases. The repetitions for each section can be adjusted according to the condition of the patient. Apply natural breathing during the practice unless otherwise specified.

B. Strengthening the Back and Bone Qigong in Sitting Position

1. Ascending-Descending Qi from the Vertex to Heel

Start in the sitting posture (with back supported if necessary), close the eyes, and calm the mind. Use natural breathing at the beginning and change to normal abdominal breathing gradually. Begin to use mind-intent to conduct Qi when the breathing becomes stable and even. While inhaling, direct the Qi to Baihui (GV-20) on the vertex (or to Mingmen (GV-4) in the lower back). Hold the breath for a few seconds, and then direct the Qi downward to the fingers or to Yongquan (KI-1) under the feet. Repeat this 7–21 times until the Qi sensation is felt at both hands and feet.

2. Rubbing the Back and Vibrating the Arms

Continue with the preceding posture. Breathe naturally; place both hands on the waist with thumbs facing forward and the other four fingers backwards. Support the back with the hands and extend the head and upper body backward to the limit. Vibrate the arms and elbows forward and backward as if waving the wings 14 times and then rub the lower back up and down with the hands 14 times.

3. Pulling the Feet and Straightening the Heels

In the sitting posture continue to breathe naturally. Clench both hands into fists and put them on top of the thighs. Close the space between the knees tightly with the toes pointing inwards and the heels pointing outwards. Sit still for a while, and then separate the knees with the heels close together and the toes pointing outwards. When soreness and distending pain are felt in the lower limbs, lift the buttocks off the seat for a while and then sit down again. When no more soreness and distending pain is felt in the sitting posture, lift both heels up from the ground and point the toes outward.

4. Extend the Back to Remove the Obstruction Series

- Pull the Feet and Extend the Back form: Sit and extend both knees outwards. Pull both feet with the hands in front of the body close to the abdomen. At the same time, raise the head and extend the back. Then relax the body and return the feet to the original place. Inhale while pulling the feet up and exhale while relaxing and returning the feet back. Repeat these movements seven times.
- Hold Knees with Both Hands and Extend the Back form: Continue with the previous posture. Extend the right leg; pull the left knee with both hands toward the chest, and extend the head and the back while

inhaling. Then relax and return the knee to the original place while exhaling. Repeat these movements seven times. Conduct the same movements on the opposite side seven times also.

- Extend the Feet and the Back form: Sit with both knees straight and both feet close together. Dorsal extend the feet and the toes, extend the arms in front of the body horizontally with palms facing each other and fingers pointing forwards, and extend the head and the back. Hold this posture for a while, and relax the body. Repeat these movements three times. Use natural breathing or apply the "inhale-pause-exhale" breathing method. Inhale while conducting the movements; pause the breathing while staying in the head and back extending postures; and exhale while relaxing.
- Support the Body with the Hands and Extend the Back form: Continue with the previous posture without changing the position of the hands; separate both feet ⅓ meter width apart. Turn the palms outwards seven times. Separate the feet ⅔ meter width apart. Press the ground forcibly with both hands on the lateral sides of the body as if to support the body in the air, and extend the head and the back. Hold this posture for a while. Relax the body and repeat the movements three times.

5. Bend the Body to Hold the Toes

Continue with the previous posture. Sit up with the back straight; move both arms upwards from the lateral sides of the body. Bend the body forward and touch the toes with the hands. Hold this posture for the duration of 1–3 breaths, and then straighten the upper body. Rest both palms on the thighs for a while, and then bend the body to touch the toes again. Repeat these movements several times. Gradually increase the repetitions to 7–14 times. After a period of practice when both hands can touch the toes easily, bend the body to hold the toes. Keep the posture for the duration of 3–5 breaths. Relax the hands and straighten the upper body. Repeat these movements seven times.

C. Eight Pieces of Brocade

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

Lower back and leg pain is a complicated syndrome. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major patterns: excess pattern of lower back and leg pain, and deficiency pattern of lower back and leg pain.

A. Excess Pattern of Lower Back and Leg Pain

The excess pattern of lower back and leg pain is often caused by living in a damp environment, walking in the rain, or external invasion of wind-cold-damp evil which accumulates or transforms into heat, which obstructs the bladder, kidney, governor, and belt meridians. It may also be due to traumatic injuries and overstrain resulting in obstruction of the meridians passing through the lower back and the leg area. The clinical manifestations include cold pain and heaviness in the lower back relieved by warmth; rigidity and achy pain with a limited range of motion; dull pain aggravated by activities and exercise; severe pain radiating to the posterior or lateral aspects of the leg; thin and moist coating or white and greasy coating on the tongue; and a wiry and tight pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Utilize Six-Step Qigong for Strengthening the Back as the primary Qigong form, in combination with Eight Pieces of Brocade, Standing Posture, Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic, and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Outdoor practice: (a) Practice Six-Step Qigong for Strengthening the Back first, and then conduct the fourth, fifth, and sixth sections of Eight Pieces of Brocade. (b) Apply the sections of Rubbing the Face and Mouth Qigong in Health Preserving Qigong to end the exercise. (c) The practice can be during the day, in the morning or afternoon, twice a day, 40–60 minutes per session. (d) Practice the above-mentioned forms for one month, then apply the Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic to enforce the effect.
2. Indoor practice: (a) Practice the Standing Posture for 5–10 minutes. (b) Apply the sections of Rubbing the Waist, Squeezing the Spine, Weaving Qigong, Kneading the Elixir Field, Rubbing the Face, and Mouth Qigong for about 15–20 minutes to end the practice. (c) The practice can be conducted twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon, 20–40 minutes per session.

B. Deficiency Pattern of Lower Back and Leg Pain

The excess pattern of lower back and leg pain is caused by obstruction of meridians due to deficiency of the vital Qi and invasion of the external wind-cold-damp evil. The clinical manifestations include slow onset and recurrence with lingering pain, soreness and achy pain, or distending dull pain. These may be aggravated by weather and exertion, and alleviated by changing the posture.

Other clinical manifestations include lower back stiffness in the morning alleviated by movement, leg pain in one side or in both sides, pain in the buttocks or in the lateral side of the leg, limited extension of the back with a slight forward standing posture, sluggish movement, weakness of the back and leg, thin and white coating on the tongue, and a deep and thin pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Strengthening the Back and Bone Qigong in Sitting Position as the primary form. Combine with Relaxation Qigong, Health Preserving Qigong, and Internal Nourishing Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Strengthening the Back and Bone Qigong in Sitting Position can be an indoor practice; allow 20–30 minutes for each practice session, and 2–3 sessions a day. After this form, conduct Squeezing the Spine, Rubbing the Waist, Weaving Qigong, Rubbing the Elixir Field, Rubbing the Face, and Mouth Qigong in Health Preserving Qigong, for 10–15 minutes, to end the practice.
2. Patients with weak body conditions are advised to practice Internal Nourishing Qigong with the "inhale-exhale-pause" breathing method first for 20–30 minutes per session, two sessions a day. Conduct Health Preserving Qigong for 20–30 minutes also. After 3–6 months, one may practice Strengthening the Back and Bone Qigong in Sitting Position accordingly.

III. Cautions

1. Lower back and leg pain can be caused by many health problems, so Qigong forms should be carried out under the guidance of Qigong doctors according to the individual condition.
2. Qigong therapy can be applied to cases with traumatic injury, but should only be used when there is a clear diagnosis and specific organ damage has been ruled out.
3. Qigong therapy can be used in combination with acupuncture, moxibustion, Tuina (massage), and physical therapy.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

Many Qigong forms were created in many periods of Chinese history and documented in ancient Qigong literature for the Bi syndrome. The important ones are presented as follows.

A. *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* (诸病源候论)

"Health Preserving Daoyin" from *Rigidity of Body and Limbs due to Wind* (风身体手足不随候 • 养生方导引法) says: "Raise two arms to the extreme and hold breath for nine breaths to treat lower back pain and fatigue caused by external wind invasion. Raise the arms alternately while lying on the stomach for the duration of nine breaths, which is called 'activating Qi as a toad.'" "Take the supine posture with knees together and feet straight, and stretch the back. Inhale with the mouth and distend and retract the abdomen for duration of seven breaths to relieve the symptoms of fever with body pain and limited movements of the legs."

"Health Preserving Daoyin" from *Wind-Bi Syndrome* (风痹候 • 养生方导引法) records: "Press the left big toe with the right heel to eliminate wind Bi syndrome. Press the right big toe with the left heel to eliminate extreme Bi syndrome. Hold the dorsum of the foot with both hands and put it on the knee to eliminate the whole body Bi syndrome."

"Take a supine posture with both knees together and toes pointing up, stretch the back and sit up. Inhale with the mouth, distend and retract the abdomen for duration of seven breaths to eliminate the pain caused by obstruction, burning pain and limited movements of the legs."

"Sitting with back bent and touch the heels with both hands. Inhale with the nose seven breaths and place both hands on the top of the knees to relieve obstruction and vomiting."

"Take a supine posture with both palms against the ground to support the body. Raise the back and extend it for five breaths to relieve the atrophic obstruction and to promote the function of the nine orifices."

"Point the feet and the toes up (dorsal-flex the ankles) for five breaths to treat the obstruction in the back and hemiplegia and improve the hearing. Long-term practice will benefit both hearing and vision."

"Sit with one leg straight and hold the other knee with both hands. Extend the back while inhaling with the nose for seven breaths to treat the leg pain with difficulty extending and flexing the knees, and dizziness."

Syndrome of Difficulty in Extending and Flexing the Four Limbs due to Wind (风四肢拘挛不得曲伸候) says: "Hold the left knee with both hands and extend the back, breathe with the nose and extend the right leg to eliminate the leg atrophic pain with difficulty extending and flexing the knees."

"Sit with the right leg straight, hold the left knee with both hands and extend the back, inhale with the nose for seven breaths and move the left leg outward to eliminate the leg pain and obstruction with difficulty extending and flexing the knees."

"Sit with the left leg straight, hold the left knee with both hands and extend the back, inhale with the nose for seven breaths and move the right leg outward to eliminate the leg pain and obstruction with difficulty extending and flexing the knees."

Syndrome of Wind-Cold (风冷候) records: "Sit up straight with knees together. At the beginning of the practice, keep the toes pointed towards each other and the heels apart. When the sensation of distending pain is felt, raise the body gradually to relax. When there

is no pain in the sitting position, lift both heels with toes touching the ground and dorsal flexed. One should adjust the sitting posture in each session to make it better. This practice can eliminate cold pain in the bladder, cold knees, cold pain of feet, and the back pain."

Consumptive and Body Pain Syndrome (虚劳体痛候) says: "Sit with knees straight and hold the toes and stretch the legs with both hands. Lower the head and hold breath for nine breaths to treat the pain in the neck, spinal column, lower back and feet, as well as consumptive disease."

"Kneel down with both knees on the ground, bend the body and lower the head with 5 cun distance between the head and ground. Raise the head and extend the left arm forward and the right arm backward 14 times. Then switch arms and repeat the same movements 14 times to relieve the severe distending pain and imbalance of Yin and Yang in the bones and sinews of the arms and back."

"Health Preserving Daoyin" in *Lumbago Syndrome* (腰痛候 • 养生方导引法) says: "Raise one arm upward as far as possible and move the palm in a circle. Extend the other arm downward and extend the fingers. Twist the body and raise the head as if looking at the upper palm, direct the heart Qi downward. Repeat these movements 28 times for each side to relieve the distending pain in the neck, arms and back."

"For a rigid back at any time…rotate the head leftwards and rightwards, 21 times for each side. Rest for a while, wait until the circulation of Qi and blood becomes stable and then repeat these movements. This form should be conducted slowly at the beginning and gradually increase the speed of the head movements. Cold or heat pain in the neck, upper and lower back can be eliminated by these movements."

Note: Wind is the leading cause of hundreds of disease; it is a Yang pathogenic factor with moving and changing properties. Treatment methods for the lower back and leg pain are mostly recorded in the chapters for wind diseases in *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* (诸病源候论). The above-mentioned forms are complete dynamic Qigong in standing, sitting and kneeling postures.

B. *Essential Prescriptions Worth Thousands Gold for Emergencies* (备急千金要方)

"Face the south, place both palms on the feet and knees and knead the limbs and joints slowly. Exhale the turbid Qi through the mouth, and inhale lucid Qi through the nose."

Note: This is a self-massage method coordinated with breath adjustment. The painful areas, the knee joints or the acupoints can be massaged by the manual techniques of kneading, pressing, pinching, grabbing or pressing at points. The method of massaging the knees in Health Preserving Qigong may be a reference for technique.

C. *Essentials of Attaining Longevity* (修龄要旨)

"Clench both hands into fists and place them on the flank regions, swing and move both shoulders 24 times to eliminate the pathogenic wind in the flank and back areas." "Stand up and twist the body leftward and rightward with the eyes looking back to the left and right 24 times on each side to eliminate the pathogenic wind in the kidney Zang."

Note: This form requires the coordination of breathing with the Daoyin movements. In a sitting posture, flex the elbows and stretch both side of the flank regions, hold the opposite knee with both hands and twist the body leftwards and rightwards 3–5 times; and move the spinal column forward and backward ten times. Coordinate these Daoyin movements with breathing by exhaling with the CHUI sound.

12. Cervical Spondylosis

Cervical spondylosis, or cervical root syndrome, is characterized as narrowing of the cervical canal or neural foramina and compression of the cervical nerve roots caused by formation of bony osteophytes, prolapsed cervical intervertebral disc, and traumatic injury or degenerative changes. It is a common disorder for people past their middle age. The age of onset for this disease is tending to become younger, and improper position and prolonged use of the computer could be a disease-inducing factor. Major clinical manifestations include dizziness, vertigo, headache, and pain in the neck and upper back, which can worsen gradually and radiate to the shoulder, arm, and hand. The features of the pain are marked by persistent soreness, distending or dull pain, numbness or tingling pain in some cases, and limited range of motion in other cases due to cervical muscular spasm.

Cervical spondylosis belongs to the category of "Bone Bi Syndrome," "Wind Bi Syndrome," and "Yin Bi Syndrome" in TCM. The pathogenesis is deficiency of vital Qi internally and invasion of pathogenic factors externally. The patient with this disorder is likely to be liver and kidney deficient and the bones and tendons may lack nourishment from essence and blood. In addition, attack of wind, cold, and damp are often involved. It is also possible that the patient has sustained an injury by carrying heavy loads on the body or had an accident causing the impeded flow of Qi and blood and the dysfunction of bones and tendons. This can lead to the formation of spurs (which is thought to be caused by leaking bone marrow), which finally progresses to "Bone Bi Syndrome." The clinical manifestations of Bone Bi Syndrome include neck and nape pain, dizziness or vertigo, numbness or soreness, ache or pain, and heaviness of shoulder and back with differences due to the different pathogenic factors involved in different cases. According to *Discussion on Bi-Syndrome* (素问 • 痹病),[1] "Cold is the main reason for pain…the pain is caused by coldness…poor nourishment results in numbness."

The treatment principle for cervical spondylosis is to strengthen the bone and spinal column by reinforcing the liver and the kidneys, invigorating the bone, and promoting the blood circulation, thus eliminating pathogenic wind, cold, or dampness accordingly. Patients with mild conditions may apply gentle-movement dynamic Qigong. Severe cases with deep cervical muscle spasm and reduced range of neck motion due to fourth and fifth cervical nerve compression may apply static Qigong as the primary form, combined carefully with dynamic Qigong according to the case.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Neck and Bone Strengthening Qigong

1. Preparatory Posture

Stand naturally with the feet one shoulder-width apart and parallel to each other, allow the arms to lie on each side of the body, and relax the whole body. Look horizontally at the scenery of the mountains, rivers, or trees far away. Focus the mind inwardly, exclude disturbing thoughts, and use restful natural breathing to gradually attain the state of tranquility.

2. Massaging the Cervical Vertebra

Stand naturally with both thumbs on Fengchi (GB-20) and the other four fingers on the occiput to support the neck. Massage both sides of the muscle along the cervical vertebra from the top down with the thumbs in a clockwise circular motion. Repeat the massage several times.

3. Pulling the Cervical Vertebra Upward

Stand naturally. While inhaling, raise arms upward from both sides of the body to the level of the shoulder with palms facing each other, Hukou facing upwards, and a distance of one shoulder width in between. Mentally raise the wrists up. While exhaling, lower the hands to each side of the hips with palms turning downwards. Keep the mind focused on pushing the palms down as if stretching the cervical vertebra downward while they are being held upward. Look straight, tuck the chin in slightly, draw the chest in, and straighten the back.

4. Rotate Both Arms

Stand naturally. Cross both hands in front of the abdomen with the right hand on top of the left one. While inhaling, move both hands upward till they are above the head. While exhaling, separate the hands, turn the palms outwards, and lower them down to the front of the abdomen. Keep the mind on the palms, mentally extend the arms outwards during the movements, and move the head and eyes following the movements of the hands.

5. Pull and Tract the Spinal Column

Stand naturally. Place both hands in front of the abdomen with the fingers pointing forward and palms facing downward. Inhale and raise the right hand upward anteriorly above the head and press the left palm downward in front of the abdomen. Keep the mind on Baihui (GV-20) and the lower elixir field—pull and put traction on the spinal column mentally. Look straight and

tuck the chin in slightly. Lower the right hand to the level of the abdomen while exhaling. (Then raise the left hand up above the head, and do the same movements following the same instructions.)

6. Opening-Closing

Stand naturally. Move both hands with the elbow flexed to about 10 cm away from the chest. In a relaxed way, keep the palms facing each other and fingers pointing downward. Inhale, separate the hands, and move them away from each other. Keep the mind on the hands while pulling them apart. Exhale and move the hands back inward, pushing. Move the head and eyes following the movements of the hands.

7. Closing Movements

Stand naturally with the hands and arms relaxed on the sides of the body. Inhale naturally. While exhaling, direct the Qi downward to the feet, and relax the whole body.

Key points of practice: All the movements should be conducted gently, slowly, and evenly, and in a coordinated way. Practice the whole set continuously and naturally without physical exertion. Keep the mind equally on the two ends of the body part being stretched to avoid uneven stretching. Keep the Qi in the lower elixir field during the whole practice and apply abdominal breathing. This form is not suitable for patients with severe hypertension and cerebral arteriosclerosis.

B. Eight Pieces of Brocade

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Relaxation Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Forms by Syndrome Differentiation

With complex indications and symptoms, cervical spondylosis can be differentiated into more syndromes clinically. When treated with Qigong, it can be divided into two major patterns: excess pattern of cervical spondylosis, and deficiency pattern of cervical spondylosis.

A. Excess Pattern of Cervical Spondylosis

In this pattern of cervical spondylosis the excess (or external) pathogenic factors are dominant over the deficiency of vital Qi. This is caused by sprains or strains, improper sleeping positions, or long-term bending over at the desk, leading to stagnation of Qi and accumulation of phlegm. In addition, the invasion of wind-cold-damp may complicate the case, resulting in blocked meridians and impeded Qi and blood flow within. Clinical manifestations include distending headaches, rigid neck, soreness, numbness, or achy pain in one shoulder and arm or both, which may be aggravated at night, and positional dizziness. These signs may be accompanied by wiry and tight pulse, wiry and soft pulse or deep and slippery pulse in the Chi position, and dark tongue with white and greasy coating.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Neck and Bone Strengthening Qigong as the primary form in combination with the Six Syllable Formula and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Practice Neck and Bone Strengthening Qigong twice a day in the morning and in the evening, 20–30 minutes per session.
2. For those who select the Six Syllable Formula as a supplementary form, the XU, HU, and CHUI sounds can be practiced more, 12–18 times.
3. For those who select Health Preserving Qigong as a supplementary form, conduct "rubbing the face" and Mouth Qigong (tapping the teeth, stirring the tongue, gargling with saliva, and swallowing the saliva) to end the practice.

B. Deficiency Pattern of Cervical Spondylosis

In this pattern of cervical spondylosis the deficiency of vital Qi is dominant over the excess of external pathogenic factors. This is typically caused by deficiencies of liver and kidney after middle age, leading to malnutrition of the governor meridian as a result of insufficient kidney essence. The pattern may include degeneration of vertebra with the spurs formed by the leaking kidney essence, plus the invasion of wind-cold-damp, resulting in obstruction of the meridians in the neck. Clinical manifestations include aversion to cold with cold hands and feet, shortness of breath, lassitude and fatigue, weakness of the limbs, distending headaches, neck pain with limited movements, pale and dark tongue with thin white coating, and deep thin pulse or soft and uneven pulse.

1. Qigong Prescription

Implement Internal Nourishing Qigong and Relaxation Qigong as the primary Qigong forms. Combine these with Health Preserving Qigong and Eight Pieces of Brocade in Sitting Position.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Practice Relaxation Qigong in a sitting or back-supported sitting posture, breathe naturally, and gradually transition to normal abdominal breathing. The mind-intention should be gentle. Apply Part-by-Part Relaxation Qigong 3–5 times; however, practice the neck and head relaxation section two additional times. Practice 15–30 minutes per time, 2–3 times a day. End the practice with Nape Qigong, Kneading the Shoulders, Squeezing the Spine, Rubbing the Face, Ear Qigong, and Mouth Qigong in Health Preserving Qigong.
2. Practice Internal Nourishing Qigong in a sitting or back-supported sitting posture, start with the natural breathing method, and gradually change into the first breathing method, which is the "inhale-pause-exhale" breathing method. Practice this 2–3 times a day for 20–30 minutes per session. Then practice Rubbing the Elixir, Rubbing the Face, and Mouth Qigong from Health Preserving Qigong. The Eight Pieces of Brocade in the sitting posture can be practiced as well, based on individual condition.

III. Cautions

1. Practice good life habits, do not smoke, and avoid pungent and spicy food. Keep an optimistic mood.
2. Avoid over-exertion. Be especially cautious with patients who work at a desk with the head bent over all the time. The balance between work and rest is especially necessary. Avoid using a pillow that is too high or too low while sleeping.
3. If the symptoms are persistent or become aggravated with subsequent recurrences, a systematic physical exam and further diagnosis may be needed in order to rule out other diseases.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

Many Qigong forms have been created in many periods of Chinese history and documented in ancient Qigong literature for "Bone Bi Syndrome," "Wind Bi Syndrome," and "Yin Bi Syndrome." The important ones are presented as follows.

A. "Wind Diseases" or "Feng Bing Zhu Hou" from *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptomology of Diseases* (诸病源候论 • 风病诸候)

"Extend one arm with palm facing upward. Hold the jaw with the other hand and rotate the head left and right, 14 times for each side. Laterally bend the head left and right without moving the hands, 14 times for each side. This form can treat rigid neck, vertigo with wind Bi in the head, sore throat, and wind Bi in certain parts of the body." "Push one hand forward with the elbow straight. Move the other hand backward from the breast as if drawing a bow. Do not exert too much force during these exercises." "For patients with rigid neck and back, slightly withdraw the jaw and extend the head. Turn the head left and right, 21 times on each side. Stop the exercises for a while, wait until the Qi and blood circulation is stable, and then start again. Slow movements are required at the beginning of the exercise."

Note: The above dynamic forms have the effect of clearing the meridians, activating Qi flow and eliminating pathogenic wind. All the movements should be started slowly, and the speed increased gradually. Jerking movement and forceful stretching must be avoided to prevent the occurrence of adverse effects.

B. "Sixteen Pieces of Brocade" from *Essentials of Attaining Longevity* (修龄要旨 • 十六段锦法)

"It is most desirable to conduct these Daoyin movements at midnight or in the early morning before the sun rises, when the air is clear and the abdomen is empty."

"Close the eyes and clench the hands into fists, tap the teeth 36 times, then hold the nape by both hands, and move the head left and right 24 times to eliminate accumulated wind at the flank regions."

"Raise both palms up with fingers crossed to support heaven, and then press the neck 24 times to eliminate pathogenic factors in the chest and diaphragm."

"Cover the ears with the palms, tap both sides of the occipital areas with the middle fingers and with the index fingers 24 times to eliminate the evils in Fengchi (GB-20)."

"Sit with the knees straight and extend both hands. Rotate the neck, the head and the upper body from side to side followed with the shoulder and arm movements 24 times to eliminate accumulated pathogenic factors in the spleen Zang."

Note: Having been repeatedly practiced and verified by Medical Qigong masters in different dynasties, these therapy forms were later collected in "Eight Pieces of Brocade" and "Health Preserving Qigong."

C. *Eight Essays for Cherishing Life* (尊生八笺)

"Sit up straight with fingers crossed, and stretching the arms as much as possible to relieve the liver Wind. Place both palms at the back of the neck with fingers crossed, and extend the neck and the head against the palms which are pushed forward to treat the shoulder pain due to heat and toxicity, blurred vision and accumulated wind." "Hold the neck and the head with both hands and move the head around, bend and extend the back to eliminate

the pathogenic wind accumulated in the chest, back and flank regions, to relieve lung diseases, and to unblock the meridians." "Lift both arms up over the head with both hands together and the fingers crossed, move the arms forward and backward, left and right over the head ten times in each direction to treat the joint pain and lung disease."

Note: The above therapies are dynamic Qigong and have been collected in Health Preserving Qigong after repeated verification by Medical Qigong masters in different dynasties.

13. Myopia

Most cases with myopic eyes belong to axis myopia. When the eyes are resting, parallel light rays enter into the eyes; after regulation of the eyeball, focus is anterior or posterior to the plane of the retina, resulting in a blurred image. This is called myopic eye. Nearsightedness is different from myopia. Nearsightedness refers to decreased distant vision when the eyes are resting and normal near vision under normal regulation due to the long axis of the eyeball, which can be adjusted by a concave lens. Myopia is one kind of ametropia in which an optical defect of improper length of the eye axis or imbalance of refractive power exists. Generally, nearsightedness is also called myopia. When the distant vision test is less than 1.0 (international standard vision test chart) or less than 5.0 (logarithmic vision test chart), it can be diagnosed as myopia.

TCM describes myopia as the condition of "nearsighted but fear of distant view," which is mainly caused by long-term use of near vision during studying and working among young people. Overused vision not only injures the eyes, but also the Zang-Fu organs, especially the liver and kidneys. When the liver and kidneys are deficient, the essence and blood are insufficient, resulting in poor nourishment of the eyes and thus myopia. Poor light and poor nutrition, consistent heavy overuse of the eyesight, and some systemic diseases all have a close relationship with the development of myopia. Prenatal factors such as poor constitution of the parents or sickness of the mother during pregnancy may contribute to inherited myopia.

Myopia is mostly due to the deficiency of the Zang organs. Therefore, the treatments for myopia emphasize tonifying the deficient Zang organ which is the main cause for the myopia; nourishing the liver and the kidneys, moistening the liver, brightening the eyes, invigorating the blood, and promoting flow of the Qi are the main treatment principles. Moreover, it is important to pay attention to eye hygiene during the treatment process.

I. Main Qigong Forms

A. Vision Improving Qigong

1. Relaxed and Tranquilized Standing

Stand naturally with the feet parallel to each other and one shoulder-width apart or wider. Slightly flex the knees and hips, tighten the anus and the pelvic floor muscles, draw in the chest, and retract the abdomen. Keep the head and neck straight with the eyes slightly closed, press the tongue against the upper palate, and drop the shoulders. Allow the arms to relax at the sides with the palms facing the body. Leave a small space between the upper arms and the torso, in the armpits. Keep tranquil and focus the mind inward. Conduct slow, subtle, even, and long breathing 6–9 times. This is the basic posture for the whole form; other sections all start from this posture, so resume it after the completion of each section.

2. Relaxing the Body Physically and Mentally

1. Slowly raise the arms from the lateral sides of the body with elbows and wrists flexed and palms facing downward. Turn the palms upward with the thumbs facing up when the wrists are at the level of the shoulders.
2. Bring the hands together at the level of the chest with palms facing down, bend the upper body forward, and slowly press the hands down along the anterior midline of the body.
3. Continue to lower both hands to the lowest point between the feet without touching the feet or the ground. Slightly grasp or root to the ground with the toes and sole of the feet where the Yongquan (KI-1) is located. Relax the arms and start to straighten the back imagining clear spring water pouring out from the Yongquan (KI-1) points, forming two tiny warm streams and flowing up through the medial sides of the feet toward the calves.
4. Straighten the back, and with relaxed wrists raise both arms slowly along the anterior midline of the body and slightly away from the body. Simultaneously, mentally direct the warm streams upwards along the medial sides of the calves through the medial and posterior aspects of the thighs into the Huiyin (CV-1) area, then past the coccyx, rising along the spinal column into the Kidney region. From there, gathering all the essentials of the five Zangs that are stored in the kidneys, the streams continue to flow upward, crossing the diaphragm to the flank regions, connecting the liver meridians exteriorly and lung meridians

interiorly, entering into the heart system, passing the chest and neck, entering the brain, and then reaching the eyes.

5. Cover both eyes with the palms, and stay in this position for the duration of one deep breath to ensure enough time for the essence of the five Zangs to pour into the eyes to nourish the eyes and enhance their potential.
6. Relax the wrists and lower the hands with the palms down to the level of the chest, and shift the focus of the mind-intention back to the heart in the meanwhile. Rotate the thumbs outwards with the palms facing upwards; conduct the mind-intention from the heart to the anterior of the armpits.
7. Horizontally swing the arms outwards in front of the body in a fan shape, shifting the focus of mind-intention from the armpits along the ulnar aspects of the arms slowly to the end of the fifth finger, the Shaochong (HR-9) points, and then slightly move the little finger and keep the mind-intention there (the first circle is now over).
8. Move the arms inward and start the second circle, starting with pressing the palms together and bending the body over, and repeating the same movements and the same mind-intention pathway as in the first cycle. Repeat these exercises twice. After the second time, rotate the arms inward and lower them from the anterior to the lateral side of the body without bending the body, to resume the natural standing posture.

3. Circling the Arms and Rotating the Eyeballs

1. Change both palms into the sword-finger posture. Move the left foot half a step to the left, with the eyes looking horizontally.
2. Extend the left hand forward horizontally to draw an arc while extending the right hand backward, and place the dorsum of the right hand against the left Yaoyan (EX-B-4).
3. Slowly raise the left hand with a dropped wrist from the anterior midline of the body to the level of the eyes. Focus the sight of both eyes on the tip of the left middle finger and start to follow the middle finger's movements (do not move the head). When the hand has moved to the highest place, turn the left wrist outward with the fingers pointing upward. Keep this hand position and lower the left hand along the left side of the body, and simultaneously flex the knees to assume a horse-riding posture. This is called "lower the body together with the lowering hands."

4. When the left hand has descended to the lowest place, turn the wrist into a dropped wrist position and lift it up to the right side of the body; at the same time, raise the body up. This is called "raise the body together with the rising hand."
5. When the left hand has moved to the highest place, turn the wrist to the left to start the second circle. Repeat these movements 6–9 times.
6. Lower the hand with the fingers pointing upwards along the anterior midline of the body; when the hand is at the level of the navel, move the right hand forward to exchange the positions of the two hands.
7. Repeat the same hand movements and rotating movements of the eyeballs but with the right hand 6–9 times.
8. Lower the right hand along the anterior midline of the body to the level of the navel; draw the left hand and left foot back to resume the natural standing posture.

4. Rubbing the Eyes with Yuji

1. Gently close the eyes. Slowly move the hands to the front of the body and raise them along the anterior midline.
2. Turn the wrists with the palms facing each other when the hands are at the level of the face. Place the radial sides of the thumbs (Yuji point, LU-10) on the inner canthi, and gently rub the eyes outward to Taiyang (EX-HN-5).
3. Move the thumbs from Taiyang (EX-HN-5) upward to the forehead; when they touch, lower the thumbs to the inner canthi along the anterior midline. Repeat this sequence of rubbing the eyes and forehead 3–9 times. Then lower the hands from the sides of the nose and mouth to the sides of the body; resume the natural standing posture.

5. Pressing the Acupoints

1. Stand naturally with the eyes half closed. Raise both hands along the conception vessel to the face level.
2. Turn the palms toward the face and flex both middle fingers. Massage the Jingming (BL-1) points with the tips of the middle fingers six times clockwise, and six times counterclockwise. Coordinate the finger movements with the breathing: exhale with the mouth while pressing

the Jingming (BL-1) points with the middle fingers, and inhale through the nose while releasing the middle fingers.

3. Use the middle fingers to massage the following points, Yuyao (EX-HN-2), Chengqi (ST-1), Tongziliao (GB-1), Yiming (EX-HN-13), and Fengchi (GB-20), in the same way as massaging the Jingming (BL-1) points. After massaging the last point of Fengchi, move both hands downward along the neck to the lateral sides of the body; resume the natural standing posture.

6. Looking Both Near and Far

1. Stand naturally. Move the left foot a step to the left and look forward for a while. Raise both hands along the anterior midline of the body; simultaneously, turn the body 90 degrees to the left.
2. While turning the body, keep the left foot in the original place and turn the right foot toward left with the heel off the ground.
3. When the hands reach the level of the jaws, place the dorsum of the hands together with the fingers pointing downwards. Turn the hands outwards and upwards until the fingers are pointed upwards. Separate the hands and move them outward and downward as if holding something. Simultaneously, flex the knees and lower the body to assume a half squatting posture facing left.
4. Interlock the fingers of both hands, raise the arms up to the level of the eyes and move them toward the eyes, and then stop moving the hands at a point of 1–2 fists' distance away from the eyes. Look at the fingerprint of the upper middle finger, and allow the eyes to follow the movements of the hands from a distance to the middle and to the near point.
5. Raise and turn the body from half squatting and facing the left back to the neutral standing posture. Look at the near fingers for a while, and then turn the palms downward and move both hands back to the lateral sides of the body. Gradually move the gaze from looking near to looking at the far distance. Then repeat the same movements but with the body turning to the right. Conduct the movements with the body turned toward each side alternately 6–9 times. Resume the natural standing posture.

7. Rubbing the Face and Tapping the Head

1. Gently close the eyes. Slowly move the hands to the front of the body and raise them along the anterior midline. Turn the palms toward the face with the fingers pointing up when the hands are at the level of the face. Rub the face downward with both palms from the forehead to the lower jaws as if washing the face.
2. Rub the face upward with both hands, up through the forehead and hair and past the vertex and occiput, and then cover the ears.
3. Tap the occipital areas with the middle fingers on top of the index fingers 6–9 times. Then move both palms forward to the chin and repeat these movements again. Afterwards, lower the hands to the lateral sides of the body and resume the natural standing posture.

8. Opening the Eyes while Pushing the Hands

1. Take a half step to the left with the left foot, and look horizontally. Turn the body 90 degrees to the left, and extend the right arm to the front and the left arm to the back. The eyes follow the movements of the left hand looking towards the back.
2. Turn the palms up while both hands are at the level of the shoulder.
3. Bring the left hand back to the root of the ear and turn the body back to the natural standing posture.
4. Move the left hand downward in the upright-palm posture and push it forward while turning the body. At the same time, lower the body to assume a horse-riding posture. While pushing the left hand forward, withdraw the right hand in a whirling motion to the level of the waist.
5. While pushing the hand, open the eyes wide (look like a tiger), clench the teeth tight, and make a tight fist with the hand on the waist. After these quick movements, gently close the eyes, raise the body, relax the fist, and lower the arms to both sides of the body.
6. Turn the body to the right and push forward with the right hand with wide open eyes in the same movements as those to the left side. Repeat these movements alternately to each side about six times.
7. Withdraw the right hand in a whirling motion to the level of the waist, relax the fist of the left hand at the same time, and swing the arms downward. Then move the arms outward and upward, stand upright and draw back the foot, close the palms above the vertex, and slowly

lower the hands along the anterior midline of the body to resume the natural standing posture.

9. Nourishing the Qi and Closing the Practice

1. Gather Qi at the lower elixir field. Close the eyes to keep the mind inward. Conduct slow, subtle, even, and deep breathing, nine times.
2. Imagine the genuine Qi produced by the exercise diffusing all over the body from the lower abdomen and converging in the eyes to nourish the body and eyes.
3. Relax the tongue and slowly open the eyes. Move the whole body gently to end the practice.

B. Relaxation Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

C. Internal Nourishing Qigong

See the details in Chapter 6.

II. Administer Qigong Froms by Syndrome Differentiation

A. Deficiency of Heart Yang

Manifestations include: Clear and good near vision, poor and blurred far vision, absence of obvious discomfort, possibly with pale complexion, palpitations, spiritlessness, pale tongue, and weak pulse. This pattern is commonly seen in pseudo-nearsightedness or mild and moderate myopia in Western ophthalmology among young people as well as in a normal test result of optical fundus.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Vision Improving Qigong as the primary form; combine with Relaxation Qigong and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Practice the whole set of Vision Improving Qigong 2–3 times a day. When the myopia is cured, practice once a day to reinforce the effect. Include "natural standing," "relaxing the body physically and mentally," and "looking near and looking to the distance" in the practice.

2. Conduct Relaxation Qigong in a standing, sitting, or lying position. Apply Part-by-Part Relaxation Qigong or Localized Relaxation Qigong (relaxation of the eyes in particular) alternately, followed by Eye Qigong, Ear Qigong, or Rubbing the Face Qigong from Health Preserving Qigong. Acupressure can also be applied to Sizhukong (SJ-23), Yuyao (EX-HN2), Zanzhu (BL-2), Jingming (BL-1), Chengqi (ST-1), and the auricular points of the eye, as much as 200 times per point.

B. Deficiency of Liver and Kidney

Manifestations include: Myopia, associated with dizziness, tinnitus, profuse dreams, soreness and weakness of the back and knees, red tongue, and thin pulse. This pattern is commonly seen in the axis myopia or severe myopia of Western ophthalmology. In addition, the syndrome may include protrusion of the eyeballs, degeneration of the optical fundus, or vitreous degenerative change with blurred vision—as if mosquitoes are flying in front of the eyes. Most cases have a family history of myopia.

1. Qigong Prescription

Use Vision Improving Qigong and Internal Nourishing Qigong as the primary forms, and combine with Roborant Qigong and Health Preserving Qigong.

2. Key Points of Practice

1. Practice the whole set of Vision Improving Qigong. Pay special attention to "relaxing the body physically and mentally," "circling the arms and rotating the eyeballs," "pressing the acupoints," and "looking both near and far." For severe cases, the whole set should be conducted more than four times a day to ensure best results. It is important to maintain the focus and intent in the practice.
2. Conduct Internal Nourishing Qigong in a sitting posture and apply the "inhale-pause-exhale" breathing method. Chant "recovery of myopia" and "improving the vision day by day" silently. Practice 30–60 minutes for one session, 2–3 sessions a day.
3. For those who select Roborant Qigong as a supplementary form, follow the recommendations in Chapter 6.
4. Conduct Health Preserving Qigong in the same way as the pattern of Deficiency of Heart Yang.

III. Cautions

1. Although Qigong therapy is effective for the treatment and prevention of myopia, it is important to select the right forms, and to practice Qigong seriously and consistently, in order to obtain the desired effects.
2. Avoid an attitude of carelessness in mild cases or of lack of confidence in severe cases, and be positive all the time.
3. Maintain eye hygiene (avoid overexertion of the eyes by not looking at near objects for too long). Keep a healthy diet with right nutrition, with reduced sugar and animal fat intake.
4. Prevent and treat systematic diseases related to myopia.

Appendix: Ancient Qigong Therapy

The liver Zang opens into the eyes. Therefore, eye diseases are usually related to the liver Zang. The liver Zang belongs to the wood. The liver Zang and the kidney Zang have a common source, thus nourishing water can moisten the wood. Ancient Qigong forms for myopia lay emphasis on regulating the liver Zang and the kidney Zang.

A. *True Essence of Attaining Longevity* or *Shou Shi Chuan Zhen* (寿世传真)

"After waking up in every morning, keep the eyes closed, rub the dorsum of both thumbs until they are warm, then rub the eyes with both thumbs 14 times. Do not open the eyes, rotate the eyeballs left and right, seven times for each side. Close the eyes tightly for a while, then suddenly open them to eliminate all eye diseases." "Press the points lateral to the eyebrows heavily 27 times with the digital joints of both thumbs slightly bent, rub the eyes and cheeks, and knead the ears 30 times; comb the hair 17 times from forehead to the occiput with the fingers, followed by swallowing the saliva many times to clear the eyes and ears." "Press the inner canthi and hold the breath, then release it when the Qi is unblocked. Conducting these practices frequently can improve vision." "Squat down with the hands on the ground; turn the head around to look backward like a tiger to eliminate the pathogenic wind from the chest and kidney Zang."

B. *Prolonging Life and Eliminating Diseases* (延年却病笺)

"Frequently press the points below the eyebrows 27 times; rub the eyes and cheeks, knead the ears with the palms and fingers 30 times; then comb the hair with the fingers from the forehead to the occiput 27 times, followed by swallowing the saliva many times to clear the eyes and ears. After exercising this form for two years, one can write at night. The points below the eyebrows are the upper He points, which have the effect of nourishing the eyes and improving the vision."

Note: The above two forms are similar in their maneuvers. However, the one from *True Essence of Attaining Longevity* stresses the requirement to conduct it after waking up in the morning. There is no time limit for practice for the other one in *Prolonging Life and Eliminating Diseases*. Actually, the forms can be conducted at any time. The points lateral or below the eyebrows

mentioned in the two forms refer to the area between the lateral end of the eyebrows and Taiyang (EX-HN-5). Swallowing the saliva is for the purpose of nourishing kidney Yin.

C. *Essentials for Health Preservation*（保生秘要）

"Direct the Qi rising from the back, along the right side, across the head and forehead, to enter the right eye and circulate several times in the eye, and then descend the Qi to the chest, passing the large intestine, and out of the anus to clear the fire in the eye and to return the fire to its original place. Direct the Qi flow on the right side for right eye problems, and on the left side for left eye problems. For problems of both eyes, bifurcate the Qi from the forehead to both eyes and then down both sides into the abdominal cavity."

Note: This is the application of the Small Heavenly Circle for eye diseases. Only when Qi is felt in the affected areas, can the healing effects be achieved.

D. *Essentials for Health Preservation*（保生秘要）

"Hold the head with both hands and raise the head while exhaling with the XU or HE sound, followed by inhaling. Rotate the eyeballs round, starting with the eyes opening and then closing. Conduct it frequently, whenever it is convenient."

Note: The liver Zang opens into the eyes. The pupils are associated the essence of the kidney. The eyes are able to see with the nourishment of the liver blood. They distinguish variations and differences with the spirit of the heart and the essence of the kidneys. This is a Daoyin form combined with the Six Syllable Formula, in which the XU sound clears the liver heat, the HE sound clears the heart fire to nourish the kidney water, and raising the head to exhale leads the genuine Qi upward. This is combined with rotating the eyeballs, fostering the upward flow of Qi into the eyes. The movements of the form are effective and simple to learn.

Reference

1. *Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (黄帝内经). Beijing: People's Medical Publishing House, 1963.

A Brief Chronology of the Dynasties in the History of China

Dynasty			**Time period**
Xia 夏			About 2100–1600 BCE
Shang 商			About 1600–1066 BCE
Zhou 周	Western Zhou 西周		About 1066–771 BCE
	Eastern Zhou 东周 Spring and Fall Period 春秋时代 Warring States[1] 战国时代		About 770–256 BCE About 770–476 BCE About 475–221 BCE
Qin 秦			About 221–206 BCE
Han 汉	Western Han[2] 西汉		About 206 BCE–23 CE
	Eastern Han 东汉		25–220 CE
Three Kingdoms 三国	Wei 魏		220–265 CE
	Shu 蜀		221–263 CE
	Wu 吴		222–280 CE
Western Jin 西晋			265–316 CE
Eastern Jin Sixteen Kingdoms	Eastern Jin 东晋		317–420 CE
	Sixteen Kingdoms[3] 十六国		304–439 CE
Northern and Southern 南北朝	Southern 南朝	Song 宋	420–479 CE
		Qi 齐	479–502 CE
		Liang 梁	502–557 CE
		Chen 陈	557–589 CE
	Northern 北朝	Northern Wei 北魏	386–534 CE
		Eastern Wei 东魏 Northern Qi 北齐	534–550 CE 550–577 CE
		Western Wei 西魏 Northern Zhou 北周	535–557 CE 557–581 CE

Dynasty		Time period
Sui 隋		581–618 CE
Tang 唐		618–907 CE
Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms 五代十国	Later Liang 后梁	907–923 CE
	Later Tang 后唐	923–936 CE
	Later Jin 后晋	936–946 CE
	Later Han 后汉	947–950 CE
	Later Zhou 后周	951–960 CE
	Ten Kingdoms[4] 十国	902–979 CE
Song 宋	Northern Song 北宋	960–1127 CE
	Southern Song 南宋	1127–1279 CE
Liao 辽		907–1125 CE
Western Xia 西夏		1038–1227 CE
Jin 金		1115–1234 CE
Yuan 元		1279–1368 CE
Ming 明		1368–1644 CE
Qing 清		1644–1911 CE
Republic of China 中华民国		1912–1949 CE 1949–CE (continued in Taiwan)
People's Republic of China 中华人民共和国		1949 CE–present day

Notes:

1. During this period, there were such dynasties as Qin, Wei, Han, Zhao, Chu, Yan, and Qi.
2. Including the "New" dynasty set up by Wang Mang (8–23 CE). A large-scale peasant rebellion broke out during the Wang Mang period, and a peasant regime was set up. The New Mang dynasty collapsed in 23 CE and the Eastern Han dynasty was founded in 25 CE.
3. During this period, some feudal regimes existed in the northern part of China, including such kingdoms as Han (Former Zhao), Cheng (Chenghan), Former Liang, Later Zhao (Wei), Former Yan, Former Qin, Later Yan, Later Qin, Western Qin, Later Liang, Southern Liang, Northern Liang, Southern Yan, Western Liang, Northern Yan, and Xia.
4. During this period, besides Later Liang, Later Tang, Later Jin, Later Hang, and Later Zhou, some feudal regimes existed, including such kingdoms as Wu, Former Shu, Wuyue, Chu, Main, Southern Han, Jinnan (Nanping), Later Shu, Southern Tang, and Northern Han, referred to in history as the "Ten Kingdoms."

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Tianjun Liu, O.M.D., is Director of the Qigong research laboratory at Beijing University of Chinese Medicine where he has taught Qigong for more than 20 years. He is also secretary general of the National Qigong Education and Study Association, secretary general of China Academic Society of Medical Qigong, and the first government approved academic mentor for Ph.D. candidates in the field of Medical Qigong in China. For the past decade, Dr. Liu has been Editor in Chief of *Qigong Study in Chinese Medicine*, the only official Qigong textbook used in universities and colleges of Traditional Chinese Medicine in China.

Associate Editor in Chief: Xiao Mei Qiang

Xiao Mei Qiang, L.Ac., MSTOM, is a New York State licensed acupuncturist and a Board Certified herbalist. In 1975, she started Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) study in her apprenticeship with Dr. Zhichun Zhang, a retired doctor and professor from Beijing Chinese Medical College. At the same time, she began acupuncture training in an apprenticeship with Dr. Ciguang Sun and Dr. Yuying Sun, who inherited Chinese medicine knowledge and special acupuncture skills from their older generation and who were the principal acupuncture doctors in the Beijing Police Hospital. Qiang moved to the United States in 1990. She started out studying physical therapy, working in rehabilitation medicine for more than 13 years. She completed further training in Acupuncture and Herbology at the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in New York where she earned her Master's degree in TCM. She has also trained in Tung's Acupuncture and in Japanese-style Acupuncture and has received certification from Harvard Medical School. Qiang currently practices Chinese medicine in her private office in Manhattan. She is an expert in treating pain, all kinds of headaches, post-stroke conditions, and neurologic disorders. Two Chinese journals, *How2USA* and *China Fortune*, reported her successful treatment of post-stroke and neurologic patients, and she received the Contribution Award of 2008 from the All Chinese Who's Who Awards.

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